

don't want my 12 year old to see some of the pornography on the internet. What are you going to do about that?

some replace

Answer: I am committed to ensuring that our children do not get exposed to indecent material and will take all constitutional measures to make sure that they don't. I signed the Communications Decency Act and we are currently defending that law in court. If the Act is invalidated, I will carefully consider alternative routes to the same goal. ~~We are also exploring~~ a V-chip for the Internet that will help parents screen out this kind of material.

add stuff from VEEP

Perhaps. The most promising alternative is

Q: WHY HAVE COLLEGE TUITIONS BEEN GOING UP?

A: Between the 1990-91 academic year and the 1995-96 academic year, overall price inflation was only 17 percent, but the average tuition and fees at public colleges increased by 31 percent and at private colleges increased by 33 percent. Some of the increase is the result of research and staffing costs that increased faster than inflation. At the public colleges, funding from State legislatures did not grow as fast as costs did. And at private colleges, while tuition went up, so did financial aid that the college was providing (in other words, not everyone was actually paying the full tuition and fees).

Q: WHAT IS THE READING PROGRAM THAT WAS INCLUDED IN THE BUDGET DEAL?

A: The agreement includes my plan to help make sure that every child learns to read well and independently by the end of third grade. Secretary Riley and Harris Wofford, the CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service, will be working with Congress on some of the details. What I have proposed includes:

- **America's Reading Corps:** 25,000 reading specialists and 11,000 AmeriCorps members serving as recruiters and coordinators, to enlist an army of one million volunteer tutors.
- **Parents as First Teachers:** Grants to foster effective programs that help parents help their children to become successful readers (e.g. HIPPI).
- **Head Start expansion.**

Mike + Bill
more. Thanks much
Elean

Additional Questions on the Test

Q: Will children with disabilities and limited English proficiency be included in these tests?

A: Yes. We want to make sure that students with disabilities and students with limited English will be able to take the test whenever possible. This means that we will provide the math test in Spanish. It also means that when the tests are administered, schools would provide accommodations that students need such as extended response time for students with disabilities or access to an English dictionary for the math test for students with limited English proficiency.

Q: Why is the math test being given in English and Spanish but the reading test is only being given in English?

A: Developing the ability to read in English is a basic skill that every child must have to succeed in American schools and society. However, there are many recent immigrants at the 8th grade level who may not speak English well but who can do advanced math and should be asked to show what math they know. We are providing a bilingual math test in Spanish and English because Spanish is the most common language other than English among students.

Q: Will you allow kids to use calculators on the new tests? Shouldn't kids know their multiplication tables on their own and not rely on calculators?

A: Kids should learn the basics. They should know how to add, subtract, multiply and divide without using a calculator. However, after a child has mastered the basics, calculators can be a useful tool for solving complicated math problems learning more difficult mathematics. After a child has mastered arithmetic, hopefully by the end of fourth or fifth grade, calculators can be useful for solving complicated math problems. As part of the test development process, an advisory committee of outstanding math teachers and other experts will be considering this issue.

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to decide what the best combination of tests would be.

Q. You say these are "national, not federal" standards and tests. What exactly does that mean, especially since the U.S. Department of Education is going to develop them?

A. It means that while the federal government will fund the development of the tests, it is not in charge of what the tests measure, when they are administered, or how they are used in schools and communities around the country.

The tests will be based on the existing National Assessment of Education Progress, which is already used in more than 40 states. The content for these tests -- the reading and math skills they measure -- have already been determined by outside groups of teachers, curriculum specialists and others, and by agreement of state education officials. These content frameworks for reading and math are widely accepted and are based on widespread input, and strong state involvement. They truly are national standards, built from the bottom up. And they are challenging for our youngsters. The new tests I have proposed will measure the same math and reading skills that NAEP already measures.

The federal government will pay for the development of these tests, just as it helps pay for other research and development in education and other policy areas, and just as it has paid for the National Assessment of Education Progress for almost 30 years. Providing good information and good tools to improve our schools has long been part of the federal government's role in education, and should remain so.

Vouchers

Q: I think voucher programs provide an opportunity to some parents they otherwise would not have -- to send their child to a private or parochial school. What is your position on school vouchers?

A: I believe there are better ways to provide greater school choice to students and their families. One very good way is to have every state pass a charter school law that allows parents and teachers to start new public charter schools that stay open only as long they do a good job. In fact, I have proposed nearly doubling the charter school start-up program (to \$100 million next year) to help start 3,000 charter schools over the next several years.

While I support public school choice, I oppose federally funded tuition vouchers for private elementary and secondary schools. I also oppose state funded and locally funded vouchers, which take money away from public schools.

*but then teachers
vouchers take*

*A bit more of a reason
for opposing vouchers
would be good here*

to improve teaching and learning. There are no federal standards or curriculum, and no requirement for outcomes-based education or any other particular approach.

With regard to a "federal takeover" of local schools, that simply isn't accurate. Goals 2000 supports local control, not federal control. You don't have to take my word for this. Harrison County and some 40 other school systems in West Virginia have received Goals 2000 funds. You should ask teachers, principals, school board members or parents in those communities if Secretary Riley and the U.S. Department of Education have come in and set their curriculum or otherwise tried to tell them what to do.

The national tests we are discussing today are focused on basic reading and math skills that all students should master. They are not part of Goals 2000 in any way, and you don't have to give the tests in order to keep receiving Goals 2000 funds. However, I believe every state should participate in Goals 2000 and in these tests. They are both ways of helping our students reach for the highest possible standards.

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A. No. The School-to-Work Program is designed to give students the academic and on-the-job training to prepare them for high skill jobs and further education. School-to-Work does not in any way track students into certain career paths, nor limit their options. It gives students and parents information and opportunities to explore a wide range of career options, and it helps make sure that students learn basic and advanced academic skills that will prepare them either for work or for college.

Testing and Standards Issues

Q. Do you believe students should be required to pass these tests in order to be promoted to the next grade level?

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I believe every state should require students to meet standards before they move on. Every state gives their own tests, in addition to these national tests. Each state will need

You've got to say that this is not a part of our testing plan. You can say all you want about how you ^{think} ~~might~~ ^{might} to do this, but you have to make it clear

PHOTOCOPY
MISC. HANDWRITING

that That's not what W. VA (or any other state)
is signing on for when they say they'll
give "cur" tests to their 4th + 8th graders.

TO MIKE Cohen
Bill Kincaid

From Regan

May 18, 1997

TO: Mike Cohen
Terry Peterson
Bill Kincaid
Aviva Steinberg

FROM: Regan Burke

RE: WV Town Hall on Ed Standards

Harrison County School Superintendent, Bob Kittle, gathered a group of teachers, business people and community leaders, together sometime in the past few days to draw up a list of questions that they think the community would like the president to answer. I think this project was prompted by my asking for information for the briefing book. I had NO PART in formulating these questions. This is a very bright group of people and some of them will be participants.

I need someone to FAX me the Call to Action and/or a description of the president's ed agenda. Kittle and others are asking for information for a meeting they are having tomorrow night with some of the participants. They want to be prepared. I am going to the meeting to tell people how to address the president and how to hold a mike -- Kittle wants to have an issues discussion but he will handle that portion.

Please FAX to me at Kittle's office: 304/624-3361. Thanks.

EDUCATOR	Schools can not have the total responsibility for making sure students are literate and functional in society. What can you do to <u>make sure parents understand what they need to do</u> to meet their children's educational needs before entering school, and, while they are in elementary school, middle school and high school?	✓
EDUCATOR	With television and other interests, children do not read for pleasure. Therefore, they do not become proficient readers. How can America become a <u>nation of readers</u> ?	□
EDUCATOR	Across the board, governmental services have been provided to schools that meet the guidelines for Title I allocations. What about the students who are in schools who <u>do not meet the low-economic criteria</u> but have real academic and personal needs?	□
EDUCATOR	Since the Educational Initiatives are a national referendum, what can the federal government or the business community do to hurdle barriers such as <u>funding</u> to meet these national goals?	?
EDUCATOR	What can schools do to provide the latest <u>technology</u> for our students to enter the work force with the necessary skills? Should <u>teacher training</u> part of the plan?	□
EDUCATOR	The National Institute of Education has collected research about reading, teaching and learning. <u>How are these reports being shared with the public and educators?</u>	✗ □
EDUCATOR	What will the government do to encourage <u>teachers</u> to go <u>back to school</u> to <u>update their certifications</u> and acquire new skills?	✓
EDUCATOR	What happened to the idea of <u>national standards</u> for various subjects? Is it likely these standards will be implemented?	(✓)
EDUCATOR	What is the difference between educational systems in <u>states</u> that score in the top ten on the National Assessment for Educational Progress test and those that score in the bottom? Is there a plan to <u>share the success stories</u> of the top ten with the bottom ten states? Since funding can not be the source of all successes, what is?	success ✓
EDUCATOR	With the emphasis of connecting classrooms to the Internet, how can our public school children be protected from the <u>harmful aspects of the Internet</u> without infringing on the availability of material for higher educational institutions or the constitutional right of freedom of speech?	□
EDUCATOR	With the recent ruling on E-rates, over 2 billion dollars were made available for communications and Internet connections in schools and libraries. As of now, this is on a first come-first-served basis. Will these funds be made <u>available again</u> and how can <u>equity in distribution</u> be guaranteed?	□
EDUCATOR	The International Reading Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics, and the Music Educators National Conference have worked to produce Standards for the English Language Arts, mathematics, and the arts. Are you <u>working with these educational organizations</u> in your call to action for American Education?	□
EDUCATOR PRINCIPAL	Educational Summits, National Initiatives, Governor's Conferences on Education have set goals for the educational community. What can the state, county, or local school systems do to implement these goals?	□
EDUCATOR PRINCIPAL	The United States has a high rate of <u>teen pregnancy</u> . What ideas do you have to address this problem?	□
EDUCATOR PRINCIPAL	I am a school principal. I want to be accountable as an educator and be a part of the "village" to help raise the children. What assurances can you give me that I will be allowed to do this?	?

BUSINESS	What can businesses do to help the educational community to <u>stay up to date with the major technological advances that are occurring today?</u>	how to help sh
BUSINESS	This school in which we sit today has over 20 business partnerships, our county probably leads the state in the number of partners per school. As a partner in education and a school to work place provider, <u>how can I assist the students who pass through my place of business with the rising costs of college tuition? Could a national program of tuition credit for workplace experience be established?</u>	□
BUSINESS	I am a business owner. I want to open up my business to the schools to work program. How can you help me to face the <u>liability issue</u> to bring students into the workplace?	□
BUSINESS	How do we provide <u>equity in facilities and opportunities</u> for all students across the country?	□
BUSINESS	How can local and state government work more closely with federal government to provide <u>greater efficiency in financing our schools</u> and its programs to move into the 21 st Century?	□
BUSINESS	Could there be <u>tax relief for those small businesses</u> which provide opportunities for our students via job shadowing, mentoring or apprenticeships?	□
BUSINESS	I want to have a greater role in my community to provide a quality educational system. What ideas do you have that would <u>allow the business community to become more involved? What role should the business community have in setting the standards of instruction</u> for a school to address the needs of the students?	□
BUSINESS	You have seen many educational programs across the world. In your opinion, how does the US compare, and <u>what do we need to do, or continue to do, to be the best in the world that meets the needs of all students?</u>	□
BUSINESS	Businesses are embracing technology in the work world. However, small businesses certainly do not have resources to expand technology to its greatest potential. Students will be coming into the work force, perhaps qualified as technologically elite workers. <u>How can business keep up and stay in the black?</u>	□
BUSINESS	As a business owner, <u>how can I work with colleges and universities to ensure that graduates have the business skills needed to enter the work place?</u>	✓
BUSINESS	I am an employer and need well-rounded and trainable employees. I am unable to expand and update the skills of my employees because of limited capital resources. <u>Should the government be a partner in providing assistance for employee training in the private sector and to help me update and expand the skills of my employees? Is it feasible to work with the education system in providing this training?</u>	□
EDUCATION HIGHER ED	You have called upon colleges to commit half of increased funding for work-study to support community service jobs. In specific instances, that implementation has begun in WV. <u>What assistance or attraction makes the community service work study feasible both economically and logistically for varying colleges to be involved? Is that increased funding then being minimized by the service job requirement?</u>	□
EDUCATION HIGHER ED	Thanks to the excellent cooperation between higher education and public secondary education in our region, we have been able to provide <u>articulation agreements</u> which allow high school students to complete numerous hours of college credit while still in high school. Do you see this reciprocity possible on a <u>national level?</u>	□

GOVERNMENT	What is the federal government's responsibility to public education in America and how does government fulfill that responsibility without becoming the "big brother" that seems to permeate our society today?	✓
GOVERNMENT	West Virginia and her citizens and many of our students suffer from the lack of proper medical attention. Will a national medical bill be forthcoming to provide medical care and/or insurance at affordable rates?	D
GOVERNMENT	I don't want to see a raise in taxes, but I want the federal government to play a stronger role in helping the local and state educational systems meet established goals and to help the student be prepared for the work force. How can this be done without raising taxes?	D
GOVERNMENT	Part of the school construction initiative says that states will administer the subsidies and that funds will be allocated for districts with the largest number of poor children and that state participation is voluntary. Can a local district apply directly to the US Department of Education if the state government has elected not to participate?	D
PARENT	Educational equity for all children is my concern. How does a rural child have the same opportunities to score well on a national test as an urban child with possibly more opportunities?	D
PARENT	What will be the government's role in making sure that my preschooler will be able to read by the fourth grade? How can that be monitored before he reaches the 4 th grade?	D
PARENT	Your call to action wants to make sure our schools instill basic American values. What are these values, and how do you plan to make this happen?	D
PARENT	Since the crime rate is steadily decreasing, we need to continue to address the root causes of crime such as illiteracy, poverty, joblessness and prejudice. What programs are we initiating to address these problems, especially literacy?	D
PARENT	How can you be a role model to the children and parents to motivate Americans to read and write on a daily basis?	D
PARENT	How does your administration plan to address and emphasize the importance that good nutrition plays in the ability of the child to learn?	D
PARENT	How will our schools meet the total needs of our students to make well rounded, individuals who are emotionally, socially, and physically prepared? My concern is that we do not produce students who are just technologically and academically prepared.	D
PARENT	What is the status of the availability of tax credits to parents who have providing their children a private education through home schooling, charter schools, ? parochial or other private schools?	D we want
PARENT	We are a middle income family with two children in college. What can the government do to help? We know plans are in the works to offer financial assistance or tax credits. When can we expect these?	D
PARENT	Do you agree that volunteerism makes a difference in schools? What can be done to allow volunteers to become actively involved in the educational process while at the same time protecting the safety and privacy of the students?	D
PARENT	I am a parent and it's been a long time since I've been in school. I lack a lot of the necessary skills to help my child receive the best possible education. Do you have any suggestions for me or for the educational community to help others like me?	✓
PARENT	Through school consolidations, many technological expansions are economically feasible because funding can be focused on one location. This availability enables	

	the concept of consolidated schools to flourish. However, we know that a school can get too large. Is there a maximum cap on the size of a school before it expands into a gargantuan proportion?	✓
PARENT	What is your vision for the use of the Internet in the everyday classroom?	D
PARENT	How can a fourth grader be assured of a successful future?	D
STUDENT	How can I be assured that what I am learning will prepare me for my future in the job force or for post high school education or for even the many career changes that economists say I'm going to have to make?	D
STUDENT	Robert C. Byrd is a wonderful facility, but it's the students and teachers that count. How can you safeguard that students do not become less important than buildings and technology?	D
STUDENT	We all realize that government can only do so much when it comes to education. While it can build new schools, fund various programs, and raise national standards, its powers are limited when it comes to advancing personal motivation and achievement among students. I see the lack of individual will and desire to succeed in school as a major problem facing our country today and my question is: How do we develop positive attitudes among students toward education?	D
STUDENT 12 TH GRADE	One of your statements in the educational action plan is to make sure there's a talented teacher in every classroom. I would be a good teacher, but will probably not choose to be a teacher because of the salary. Is there anything the government can do to make the salary of teachers greater to attract talented and capable students?	✓
STUDENT 12 TH GRADE	One of the areas of education that is extremely important to me as a student is in the fine arts. It has helped me to develop discipline and an ability to appreciate the classic and modern works in music, art and theater. My question to you is "What are your feelings regarding the importance of the arts in the school system today and why is it not included in your ten points"?	D
STUDENT 12 TH GRADE	In light of the school to work initiative, students are going to be able to job shadow. What if the area I live in does not allow me the opportunity to experience the area in which I'm interested? What's going to be done to allow me to pursue this area of interest?	D
STUDENT 12 TH GRADE	Many students in this area are from welfare assisted families. How does your welfare reform program plan to continue to help those who are needy and at the same time shift responsibility from government to the people?	D
STUDENT 12 TH GRADE	As a senior, I am preparing for the next step in my education--college. I know that I will be relying on federal programs including the work-study program, as well as federal loans, and grants to pay for my education. With such a considerable dependence on federal aid, my question is "Can I be assured of these funds in the future"?	D
STUDENT 12 TH GRADE	I'd like to have more say in the classes I take. Why aren't there more choices for me to take based on my needs or interests instead of set curriculum offerings?	D
STUDENT 4 TH GRADE	How does what I'm learning in my fourth grade class compare with what another fourth grade student is learning in California, New York, or even Japan?	D
STUDENT 4 TH GRADE	I would like for my parents to be at home with me to help me in the evenings. But they have to work and can't be there to help me. There is an after-school program at my friend's school. Will there be any money to have after-school programs at other schools like mine?	✓

STUDENT 8 TH GRADE	Why do I go to school for twelve years and other students in other countries go to school for 13 or 14 years. Do some of us need more than 12 years to be ready for the job force?	D
STUDENT 8 TH GRADE	Why do we have to compare me with students in other places? How are the results going to be used?	D
STUDENT 8 TH GRADE	Why did you choose Harrison County West Virginia for this first education town meeting?	D
STUDENT 8 TH GRADE	I saw on the news about people walking into schools and shooting students. How can I be sure that my school is safe?	D
STUDENT HIGH SCHOOL	One of the 10 principles in your Call to Action for American Education plan challenges every state to adopt and implement some form of <u>national testing</u> to raise educational standards. However, it seems by the time we reach the age of 8, we have all been tested, rated, ranked, and virtually stamped for the rest of our education with a particular score or grade that allows us to be easily sorted and separated. <u>What provisions do you feel should be made to insure that these standardized tests do not inaccurately label students?</u>	D

to improve teaching and learning. There are no federal standards or curriculum, and no requirement for outcomes-based education or any other particular approach.

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Mike + Bill -
Great work. If you guys think
we can knock a few of these out,
I'd do so. Comments in 3
additional questions coming up.

IDEA and Discipline

Q. I am concerned about keeping our schools safe and disciplined. I understand that the new special education law (IDEA) just passed by Congress still makes it difficult to discipline disruptive students who are disabled. How can the other students learn if teachers can't maintain order?

A. First, let me point out that the federal special education law, first passed in the 1970's, has been essential for providing education opportunities for children with disabilities. Before that law was passed, many children with disabilities were denied an education. Since the law was passed, educational opportunities for children with disabilities have increased dramatically, because the law guarantees an education to these children. This is a good thing, because the education of every child is important, because education is the way for for all of our people to become productive and independent citizens. I am proud to be able to sign, next month, the bill continuing this law in effect.

Second, I agree that it is very important for all children that classrooms be orderly places where children can learn and teachers can teach. While maintaining the responsibility to provide children with disabilities with a free and appropriate education, this new bill strengthens the ability of teachers and principals to deal with disruptive or dangerous students, including those with disabilities. It does this by:

- making it easier for principals to remove children with disabilities who bring a gun, weapon or drugs to school, or who pose a danger to themselves, their teachers or their classmates from the classroom, while continuing to provide them with an education in another setting.
- making it easier to address a child's behavior problems early on -- before they get out of hand -- by requiring that these be considered in the development of an Individual Education Plan, and by making the regular classroom teacher a part of the team that develops the plan.

Finding the right balance between the protection of individual ^(students) rights and the needs of a larger group is often a difficult issue. I am pleased that the Congress, with an overwhelming bipartisan majority, has found a way to strike that balance.

Goals 2000 and School-to-Work Controversies

Q. Aren't these tests just another version of your Goals 2000 program, in which the federal government promotes outcomes-based education, politically-correct history, and a federal takeover of our schools?

A. No. Goals 2000 provides federal support for state and local efforts to raise academic standards in the basic skills and core academic subjects, and for local, bottom up efforts

Then tests are not a part of Goals 2000, but let me say that I'm proud of Goals 2000.

Budget-Related Questions

Q: Why doesn't the budget plan include help for school construction?

A: This is a critical need, and I have proposed a plan for jump-starting State and local school construction and renovation efforts. Unfortunately, there was considerable resistance in the budget negotiations to including it in the agreement. I am disappointed that it could not be included.

- We should remember that if we failed to reach agreement on a balanced budget plan, that would have made local school construction efforts more difficult, by raising interest rates.
- On balance, the agreement was a tremendous success on education overall.
- Within the context of the agreement, I will continue to look for opportunities to address this problem.

Q: Won't Your HOPE Scholarship plan cause college tuitions to go up even more than they already have been?

A: Actually, Federal aid does not seem to have much of an effect on tuition costs. When Federal college aid was rising in the 1970s, real college tuitions remained fairly steady. But when real Federal aid dropped slightly during the 1980s, that is when tuitions rose most sharply. One study suggests that is partly because colleges are trying to provide aid to the lowest-income students, and to do that they increase tuition for everyone else. By restoring the Federal government's commitment to financial aid -- for both low-income and middle-income families -- we are helping to reduce one of the pressures that increases tuition and fees.

Q: Will the IRS be looking at my grades to see if I'm eligible for the HOPE Scholarship??

[NOTE: On Sunday, Frank Raines told CNN that “we think that having the IRS trying to enforce grades may be going a little too far, and we’re going to try to find a way to simplify the program.”]

A: The IRS would not be looking at student transcripts. But I do want to make sure that we are not only helping people pay for college, but also that they have an incentive to work hard once they are there. A new study from Georgia State University suggests that the grade requirement in Georgia’s HOPE Scholarship plan has helped some of the borderline students, those who started out very close to the B average, to perform better in college.

I have gotten some feedback about the grade requirement in my HOPE Scholarship plan, and Secretary Riley and Secretary Rubin will be working closely with Congress to make sure that we encourage students to work hard, but that we do it in a simple way, without imposing any undue burdens on taxpayers or colleges.

Q: DOES THE BUDGET AGREEMENT CUT STUDENT LOANS?

A: No, it will not affect student loan borrowers in any way. There are some savings to taxpayers that we can achieve by making government more efficient and reducing subsidies to middlemen -- something that I proposed in my Budget in January -- and the negotiators agreed to some of those changes to help bring the deficit down by \$1.7 billion. But the agreement makes it clear that there can be no cuts in benefits or availability of loans. (And colleges may continue to choose to participate in the Direct Loan program or the guarantee system).

Q: WITH THE TAX CUTS, WILL THERE BE ANY MONEY LEFT FOR EDUCATION PROGRAMS?

A: The budget agreement includes *the largest increase in our investment in education in 30 years, and the largest single boost in college aid since the G.I. Bill*. It includes:

- **Roughly \$35 billion in tax cuts for higher education**, consistent with the HOPE Scholarship and \$10,000 tax deduction.
- **Pell Grant Expansion.** ~~Includes~~ the largest increase in two decades -- a funding boost of 25%. The maximum award will reach \$3,000, an increase of \$300. In the 1998 budget alone, an additional 348,000 students will receive grants: 130,000 young people from moderate-income families, and 218,000 low income students over the age of 24.

- **Technology Literacy.** Double funding to help ensure that computers are in every classroom, every classroom is connected to the Internet, all teachers are trained, and that high quality software and on-line resources are available to help schools integrate technology into the curriculum so that students can become technologically literate.
- **Head Start.** Continued expansion toward my goal of 1 million kids in 2002.
- **America Reads.** A child literacy initiative consistent with the America Reads Challenge, to mobilize volunteers to help every child learn to read well and independently by the end of third grade.
- **Job Corps and other Job Training.** A 12% increase for job training programs, including continued expansion of Job Corps

Q: DOES TUTORING MAKE A DIFFERENCE? AREN'T TEACHERS MOST IMPORTANT?

A: Even the best teachers will tell you that some children need extra help outside the classroom hours in order to catch up. And the research shows that tutoring programs that provide consistent help, with trained tutors, can make a big difference. For example:

--In Simpson County, Kentucky, 25 AmeriCorps members helped second graders jump 3 reading levels in one year

--At Hands on Atlanta, in the first three years of AmeriCorps involvement, the schools have seen an 11 percent increase in performance on national standardized tests in reading and in math, and 25 percent fewer discipline problems.

--At Reading One-to-One in Texas, with just a semester of tutoring, children improve one full reading level.

Q: How will these tests affect students who participate in home schooling?

A: In a legal sense, it will not affect those students at all. No student in a home school will be required to take these tests, though they will be able to if they want to. Every parent will have access to the tests on the Internet each year, so if they want to see for themselves how well their students are measuring up against these standards, they can find out.

Q. One of your goals is to make sure every 12 year old can log on to the Internet. I

WEST VIRGINIA STANDARDS TOWN HALL MEETING
Thursday, May 22, 1997

DRAFT Q & A's for the President

National Standards/National Tests

Question: **Standards:** Why is the development of national standards so important *now*?

Answer: Student achievement is not improving fast enough. Today's economy demands higher and higher levels of skill and education to succeed in all types of jobs and far too many children are not meeting the standards that will prepare them for tomorrow. High standards pull young people up and encourage them to work harder and create high expectations for themselves. They also provide a benchmark for parents and teachers for what children should know and whether they are learning it. Places that have set high standards have made progress in student achievement. I want that improvement for *all* our children.

Question: **Standards:** How are you going to ensure that all children can meet these high standards?

Answer: First, these tests, together with state and local tests, will help ~~help~~ teachers and parents know which children need help and what help they need.

Second, these tests are about lifting our students up, not putting them down. We must make sure that our students have safe and orderly classrooms, well prepared teachers, access to good textbooks, computers and other technology that will connect them to the information superhighway.

I'm doing my part to help by making sure that the federal government makes a substantial investment in education. And Secretary Riley and the Education Department will continue to provide information on the best practices in each area. But the primary responsibility lies here with those of you in this room -- parents, teachers and principals, school board members, others in the community and state and local officials. You have the responsibility to come together and provide our students with the preparation they need, for these standards and for the future.

sounds too much like:
it's your
problem,
not mine

Question: **National Test.** What are you doing to support participation of students with disabilities in the 4th and 8th grade assessments you are developing?

Answer: We must expect more of all our children, including those with disabilities. The Department of Education, which is working with education experts to help develop the tests, will make the 4th grade reading and 8th grade math tests available to states and schools in formats accessible to students with disabilities. In addition, schools will be able to get technical assistance and other support to help ensure that students with disabilities are appropriately included.

Question: Why 4th grade reading and 8th grade math?

Answer: Reading and math are two of the most basic skills. Children can't move ahead in school in any subject if they can't read English by the 4th grade. And 8th grade math is a pivotal point in terms of making sure that a student has mastered the mathematics she needs to move forward in high school and go to college or into the work place.

Children go to school for the first three years of grade school to learn how to read, so they can spend the rest of their years reading to learn. There is a strong link between low reading skills, falling behind in school, disruptive behavior, and dropping out. Yet, about 40% of our children are not learning how to read well and independently by the end of third grade, decreasing their chances of succeeding in school and in life. We need to change this.

8th grade math is also a critical turning point for students. At that point, students need to have mastered the basics of math -- including the foundations of algebra and geometry -- so they are prepared to go on and take the harder math and science courses they need for college preparation or jobs right out of high school. In our high technology, international economy, our students will need to know more mathematics than most of us adults learned. And, having good math skills is increasingly a prerequisite for getting a good job, students who don't take algebra and geometry are much less likely to go to college than students who do.

Unfortunately, right now, the United States is below the

international average in math at 8th grade. We can do better. Many more young people should be taking algebra by the end of the 8th grade so they can take more advanced course in high school. That is what most 13 year olds are doing around the world. Only 25% of our 8th graders have learned algebra -- as opposed to almost 100% of students in other industrialized nations. Having a national benchmark in math at 8th grade will show whether our students are where they should be.

Question: What about other national standards that have been developed in subjects like science and history? Do you support those? Why do you focus so much on reading and math?

Answer: There have been excellent voluntary national standards produced in several subjects, such as math, geography, and civics, that many states and districts are finding useful as they develop their own state and local standards. Other proposed standards, such as the controversial history standards, have not been as successful. At the national level we are focusing on reading and math because they are the first basics, and there is a grassroots, national consensus that every student needs to master these two core subjects.

Question: Isn't 4th grade too late for a reading test?

Answer: No. Children are expected to have made the transition from learning to read to reading to learn by the 4th grade. This is the critical turning point -- and the point we should measure to see that all our students are making it.

Of course, a short national test in reading does not replace what teachers and parents have always done -- paying attention to children's progress in learning to read all through the critical early childhood years.

Question: How will these tests differ from existing tests? What will they tell us that we don't already know?

Answer: These tests will provide information to parents and teachers about individual student scores and how close a child is to reaching high national standards. Currently, there is no way of knowing whether your child's progress or your child's school is measuring up to national and international standards. Now, each state sets its own

standards, and some are more difficult than others, so it is difficult for parents to tell how well their child is actually doing compared with tough, meaningful national and international benchmarks--the kind they will be judged against in the real world. These tests will give parents and teachers, wherever they live, an opportunity to know how their children are doing.

Question: Who decides what is on the tests?

Answer: The tests will be based on the widely accepted frameworks of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). These frameworks are developed by nationally recognized teachers and other educators and community leaders, with input from thousands of interested parents, teachers and others interested in education.

At present 43 states -- including West Virginia -- participate in the NAEP and have agreed that the NAEP frameworks in reading and math are good standards for what students should know in these critical subjects.

Question: Will the federal government have my child's test score? Will it be private?

Answer: The federal government will not be collecting individual student scores. It will be up to states and communities to do that, if they choose to and they will have to keep individual student scores confidential.

Question: What will happen to students who fail the test?

Answer: We are developing these tests so that parents and teachers get accurate information about how students are doing in relation to challenging national and international standards. I believe we should give extra help--in class, special tutoring after school, summer school if necessary--to students who need it. It is up to states, community leaders, teachers and parents to determine how they will respond to such needs in their community.

Likewise, it will be up to each state and community how they want to use the test results -- and what sanctions they want to provide schools and students who aren't doing well. I have encouraged

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p. 2*

states and school districts to make sure that students are ready to advance from school to school, and to hold teachers and schools accountable for student performance.

Question: Do you believe students should be required to pass these tests in order to be promoted to the next grade level?

Answer: I believe that if we set standards for students, they should be required to meet the standards in order to be promoted from elementary to middle school, from middle school to high school, and before graduating from high school. When I was Governor, we required students to pass an 8th grade test before moving into high school. While some students had difficulty passing the test the first time, almost everyone did ultimately. We gave extra help to students who needed it, including summer school. And over time, the percentage of students who passed the test on the first time increased, as students, teachers and parents came to understand how well the did mattered.

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(sup. 2)

I believe every state should require students to meet standards before they move on. Every state gives their own tests, in addition to these national tests. Each state will need to decide what the best combination of tests would be.

Question: How much will it cost to give the tests?

Answer: The total cost of developing the new tests will be between \$10 - 12 million per year in 1997 and 1998. The cost of administering the new tests is estimated to be \$10 - \$12 per student, and I've proposed that the Department of Education reimburse these costs for the first year. This investment is more than worth it to make sure we are doing all we can to help students master the basics.

Question: How will you ensure that teachers are prepared to help students meet these high standards?

Answer: Making sure that our teachers are prepared to teach to these high standards is a shared responsibility, primarily among school systems, colleges and universities, states, and the teachers themselves.

We must do a better job of preparing teachers before they get to the classroom, and helping them in their first several years. And we have to help teachers keep learning while they are on the job.

We also need standards of excellence for teachers and we've got to reward excellence. That's why I support the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, which has developed tough teacher standards. Today they are only about 500 nationally board certified teachers in the country, and none in West Virginia. I think we need at least one master teacher in every school. I hope West Virginia will take steps to do this and I have put money in my budget to help.

Question: How will these tests affect students who participate in home schooling?

Answer: In a legal sense, it will not affect those students at all. No student in a home school will be required to take these tests, though they will be able to if they want to. Every parent will have access to the tests on the Internet each year, so if they want to see for themselves how well their students are measuring up against these standards, they can find out.

Repeat

Education--General

Question: **Parental Responsibility:** What can you do to make sure parents understand what they need to do to make sure their children are ready to start school, and how they can help their children as they go through?

Answer: Over thirty years of research shows that family involvement in children's learning is critical to their child's success. There are lots of things parents can do to help their children start school ready to learn. I strongly urge parents to read to their children starting in their earliest years. Schools can provide a welcoming atmosphere for parents, while local employers can help by giving paid leave for employees to be involved in their children's schools, or provide other means for employees to attend parent-teacher conferences or volunteer as tutors or mentors. Some of the best employers do it.

Question: **Parental Responsibility:** What about parents who can't read and write, or have other limitations? How can they help their children get ready for and successfully proceed through school?

Answer: Every parent can help, from the first days of a child's life--by talking and singing to them, paying attention to them, and helping them learn their colors and shapes. All parents can help their kids in other ways by showing up at school events, asking kids if they need help and getting it for them, being active in school activities, and giving them a place to do homework and making sure they do it. Through programs like Adult Education and Even Start family literacy we support local initiatives that assist parents to gain the skills they need to help their children and build a better life for themselves and their families.

Question: **Business Community Partnerships:** More and more, we are finding the need for employees with higher levels of training than we are seeing coming into the workplace. How can employers like me help ensure that more highly qualified candidates will enter the workforce?

Answer: The business community knows as well as any how important high standards are in educating our youth. All over the country,

businesses have successfully forged partnerships with their local school communities to provide resources like apprenticeship and mentoring programs, after school programs, etc. Last month, over 200 high-tech industry leaders who hire graduates from across the country endorsed my standards and testing initiative because they know first hand how important it is to have highly skilled graduates entering their workforces. You can help by partnering with your local school community.

Question: **Teacher Salaries:** I'd like to become a teacher and I think I'd be a good one. But I can't afford it. Is there anything the government can do to make teacher salaries greater?

Answer: You set the salary for teachers here in West Virginia, just as states and local school districts do across America. In this state you have made substantial progress on teachers' salaries during the 1990s. Through income-contingent student loans, I have worked to make it easier for college graduates to enter teaching or pursue other service-related professions where starting salaries are relatively low.

Question: **Safe Schools:** There are stories all the time about people walking into schools and shooting kids, fights, drugs, etc. What is the government doing to stop it?

Answer: I have challenged all schools to put in place high standards of discipline and behavior along with tough measures to keep guns and drugs out of schools. Last year I protected the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities program that supports school security, and drug and violence prevention programs in 97 percent of our country's school districts. I also support school uniforms as one way to deter school violence, and have encouraged communities to enforce truancy laws.

Question: The School-to-Work program has been somewhat controversial in West Virginia. Is it true that School-to-Work tracks kids into inferior programs of study with low academic standards and

Repeat

requires them to make job decisions in elementary and middle schools?

Answer: No. The School-to-Work Program is designed to give students the academic and on-the-job-training to prepare them for high skill jobs and further education. School-to-Work does not in any way track students into certain career paths, nor limit their options. It gives students and parents information and opportunities to explore a wide range of career options, and it helps make sure that students learn basic and advanced academic skills that will prepare them either for work or for college.

Local Questions/Issues: (The following questions questions were derived from a set submitted by Bob Kittle, Harrison County School Superintendent, who gathered a group of teachers, students and business and community leaders to draw up questions they believed the community would like the President to address).

Question: **Internet Access.** With the emphasis on connecting classrooms to the Internet, how can our public school children be protected from the harmful aspects of the Internet?

Answer: I am committed to ensuring that our children do not get exposed to indecent material and will take all constitutional measures to make sure that they don't. I signed the Communications Decency Act and we are currently defending that law in court. If the Act is invalidated, I will carefully consider alternative routes to the same goal. We are also exploring a V-chip for the Internet that will help parents screen out this kind of material.

Question: **E-rate.** E-rate funds for communications and Internet connection schools and libraries are being made on a first-come, first serve basis. Will the funds be available again and how will you ensure equity in distribution of funds?

Answer: Over the next several months, the Federal Communication Commission will work with the Department of Education and the education community to develop as easy application process for schools and libraries to follow. I have asked Secretary Riley and FCC Chairman Reed Hundt to work with local educators, communities and parents on how to help them understand the E-rate and upgrade their schools to take advantage of it. The level of the discount will be higher for the schools in disadvantaged neighborhoods and in rural schools with higher costs of connecting to the Internet.

Question: **Partnerships.** What can local school systems do to help implement the goals set by the education summits and your national initiatives?

Answer: There are lots of things that local schools can do:

- Use the national tests and set high standards.

- Help prepare teachers to become national board-certified and reward them when they do.
- Develop and enforce fair standards of conduct for all students.
- Get the whole community involved in helping young children learn to read. Pediatricians should prescribe reading to parents of infants and preschoolers. College students and others should volunteer to tutor.
- Keep working, as you are in West Virginia, to make sure every 12 year old can log onto the Internet.
- Start early in letting students and families know that they will need at least 2 years of postsecondary education.

Question: **Technology.** What can the business community do to help the educational community to stay up to date with the major technological advances that are occurring today?

Answer: The business community has been one of the biggest supporters of our education technology initiative and West Virginia is a national leader in the use of technology in the classrooms. Some 85% of West Virginia's schools will be connected to the Internet by the end of this year and 14,000 educators have been trained to use computers for basic skills instruction. I applaud Bell Atlantic-West Virginia for its commitment to wiring schools, IBM for its support of technology innovation, and Ashland Oil and others for their work on behalf of education reform here in the state.

Question: **School to Work.** How do I open my business up to the school to work program?

Answer: Business supports school-to-work partnerships because they represent an investment in people which yields access to highly trained, versatile workers who are certified and knowledgeable in all aspects of an industry. I would urge any employer interested in getting more involved to talk with their local school system and community colleges about how to participate.

]

Question: ***After-School Programs:*** Both of my parents work. Will there be any money to have after-school programs at schools like mine?

Answer: My budget includes a new initiative to provide safe havens and to extend learning opportunities for children and their families at schools across the country. The initiative will help after-school, summer and weekend programs get started as Community Learning Centers and foster community involvement.

Question: How can we become a nation of readers?

Answer: My America Reads Challenge is pursuing several essential strategies to help our children learn to read: creating more learning opportunities to supplement classroom reading instruction; encouraging parent involvement to help children develop readiness skills for reading beginning at birth, as well as involvement throughout the school years; and bringing best teaching practices into classrooms.

The America Reads Challenge legislative proposal specifically would build on groundwork laid by classroom teachers, librarians, and reading specialists by drawing upon the invigorating spirit of community volunteers in tutoring. The proposal encourages family and community involvement in the education of America's children by linking AmeriCorps members, trained and qualified reading professionals, and volunteer tutors to community and school-based literacy efforts.

America Reads also calls for the expansion of Head Start to reach one million 3- and 4-year-olds; the strengthening and expansion of Title I and Even Start Programs to enhance teaching and learning during the school day, as well as family literacy efforts; and finally, challenging the private sector and community groups to work with schools and libraries.

Right now, each of us can do our part and get involved in the America Reads Challenge.

1) Instill a love of reading in your child. Parents are their child's first teachers and learning begins at home. By reading aloud to their children regularly and using TV wisely, parents can empower their children with the lifelong habit of reading and learning.

2) Call a local school or literacy program and volunteer as a reading tutor. Many community and civic groups already sponsor tutoring programs and always welcome volunteers.

3) Call 1-800-USA-LEARN and ask to get involved in READ*WRITE*NOW, a summer reading component of the America Reads Challenge.

4) Call the college or university nearest you, or your alma mater, to see if it has joined the America Reads Challenge. The best office to begin with may be the Financial Aid Offices.

Need Further Work

Q: Will children with disabilities and limited English proficiency be included in these tests?

A: Yes. We want to make sure that students with disabilities and students with limited English will be able to take the test whenever possible. This means that we will provide the math test in Spanish. It also means that when the tests are administered, schools would provide accommodations that students need such as extended response time for students with disabilities or access to an English dictionary for the math test for students with limited English proficiency.

Q: Why is the math test being given in English and Spanish but the reading test is only being given in English?

A: Developing the ability to read in English is a basic ^{skill} that every child ~~has to~~ ^{must} have to succeed in American schools and society. On the other hand, competency in math cuts across languages. There are many immigrant and other children at the 8th grade level who have limited English proficiency but who can learn advanced math and should be asked to show what math they know. We are providing a bilingual math test in Spanish and English because Spanish is the most common language other than English among students.

Q: Will you allow kids to use calculators on the new tests? Shouldn't kids know their multiplication tables on their own and not rely on calculators?

A: Kids should learn the basics. They should know how to add, subtract, multiply and divide. However, that after a child has mastered the basics, calculators can be a useful tool for learning more difficult mathematics. After a child has mastered arithmetic, hopefully by the end of fourth or fifth grade, calculators can be effective time-savers so that students spend time applying mathematical concepts to real world problems. ^{without using a calculator} (NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE YET ON THIS FOR THE TEST BUT THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MADE UP OF NATIONALLY KNOWN MATH TEACHERS WILL BE ADVISING ON THIS ISSUE AND WE EXPECT THAT CALCULATOR USE WILL BE PERMITTED FOR AT LEAST PART OF THE MATH TEST.)

Q: How will you ensure that teachers are prepared to help students meet these high standards?

A: We have made a high-quality teaching force a key priority. Two recent reports - the report of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future and the report of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study -- show that much more is required to prepare and support teachers to enable them to teach to high standards.

With regard
to calculator
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The Department of Education is focusing on the most effective strategies to address the challenges in improving teaching quality and accountability, including recruitment, alignment with challenging standards, professional development, and rewards for excellence. The Department supports these efforts through its programs, including Eisenhower professional development, Title I, and Goals 2000 funding, as well as by sharing best practices with the field.

Question: **Technology:** At the same time that we provide our children important and exciting learning opportunities through technology, how do we protect our children from the negative influences and forces on the Internet?

Answer: [to be filled in by WH]

WEST VIRGINIA STANDARDS TOWN HALL MEETING
Thursday, May 22, 1997

Q & A's for the President

National Standards/National Tests

Question: **Standards:** Why is the development of national standards so important now?

Answer: Student achievement is not improving fast enough. Today's economy demands higher and higher levels of skill and education to succeed in all types of jobs and far too many children are not meeting the standards that will prepare them for tomorrow. High standards pull young people up and encourage them to work harder and create high expectations for themselves. They also provide a benchmark for parents and teachers for what children should know and whether they are learning it. And places that have set high standards have shown improvement in student achievement. I want that improvement for *all* our children. ✓

Question: **Standards:** How are you going to ensure that all children can meet these high standards? on left

Answer: ① I have challenged every state and every school to establish meaningful standards for what students should know in core subjects like reading and math. These are the basics. We will develop national tests that will help measure whether our children are meeting these standards and help us adjust what we teach if they are not. These standards give feedback to parents and teachers and help let them know what they need to do to help their children succeed. *where children need help*

② Then we must make sure students have safe & cozy classrooms with personal teacher access to technology, textbooks and other resources

Question: **National Test.** What are you doing to support participation of students with disabilities in the 4th and 8th grade assessments you are developing?

Answer: *we must expect more of all of our children, including those with disabilities*
The Department of Education, which is working with education experts to help develop the tests, will make the 4th grade reading and 8th grade math tests available to states and schools in formats that will make them accessible to students with disabilities. In addition, the Department will provide technical assistance and other support to help schools ensure that students with disabilities are appropriately included. *Technical assistance*

③ I'm doing my part by making a disability Federal (West Virginia) education. State & local communities, they must take the responsibility

Q:

Why do we need these tests? Aren't there already enough tests?

A:

This isn't about tests. It is about achieving high standards and mastering the basics. We owe it to our children to make sure that no matter where they live, they are getting the best education possible.

In addition, states and districts can use this test as a supplement or replacement to parts of their existing testing program if they want.

Q:

Why 4th grade reading and 8th grade math?

A:

Reading and math are two of the most basic skills. Children can't move ahead in school in any subject if they can't read English by the 4th grade. And 8th grade math is a pivotal point in terms of making sure that a student has mastered the mathematics she needs to move forward in high school and go to college or into the work place.

Children go to school for the first three years of grade school to learn how to read, so they can spend the rest of their years reading to learn. There is a strong link between low reading skills, falling behind in school, disruptive behavior, and dropping out. Yet, about 40% of our children are not learning how to read well and independently by the end of third grade, decreasing their chances of succeeding in school and in life. We need to change this.

8th grade math is also a critical turning point for students. At that point, students need to have mastered the basics of math -- including the foundations of algebra and geometry -- so they are prepared to go on and take the harder math and science courses they need for college preparation or jobs right out of high school. In our high technology, international economy, our students will need to know more mathematics than most of us adults learned. And, having good math skills is increasingly a prerequisite for getting a good job, students who don't take algebra and geometry are much less likely to go to college than students who do.

Unfortunately, right now, the United States is below the international average in math at 8th grade. We can do better. Many more young people should be taking algebra by the end of the 8th grade so they can take more advanced course in high school. That is what most 13 year olds are doing around the world. Only 25% of our 8th graders have learned algebra -- as opposed to almost 100% of students in other industrialized nations. Having a national benchmark in math at 8th grade will show whether our students are where they should be.

Question: What about standards in other subjects like science and history?

Answer:

I support high standards not just in reading and math but for student learning generally, in all the core subjects, teacher quality,

and school performance. I also support high standards of discipline and conduct, challenging all schools to teach good values and good citizenship. At the national level we are focusing on reading and math because they are the basics, and there is a national consensus that every student needs to master these two core subjects.

Q: Isn't 4th grade too late for a reading test?

A: No. Children are expected to have made the transition from learning to read to reading to learn by the 4th grade. This is the critical turning point -- and the point we should measure to see that all our students are making it.

Of course, a short national test in reading does not replace what teachers and parents have always done -- paying attention to children's progress in learning to read all through the critical early childhood years. ~~Schools should continue to do the test & diagnose the child's progress~~

Q: How will these tests differ from existing tests?

A: These tests will provide parents and teachers individual scores for their students and children as they relate to a challenging national and, in the case of mathematics, an international benchmark. All students take every item on the tests, and every item will be available after the administration of the tests, as well as scoring guides. That way, unlike the standardized tests your child takes now, with this test, the parent and teacher will actually be able to see the test questions and where your child did well or poorly on the test.

Q: What will these tests tell us that we don't already know?

A: These tests will provide information to parents and teachers about individual students scores and how close a child is to reaching high national standards. Currently, there is no way of knowing whether your child's progress or your child's school is measuring up to national and international standards. These tests will give parents and teachers, wherever they live, an opportunity to know how their children are doing. They will have challenging national benchmarks, and in the case of mathematics, international benchmarks to measure against.

This is not a substitute for tests that states are developing, but will be used by states and communities in conjunction with their own tests. It will provide national and (for math, international) points of comparison for fourth grade reading and for eighth-grade math.

Now, since each state sets its own standards, and ~~the~~ some are for more difficult than others. So it is difficult for parents to feel how well their child is actually doing compared with tough, meaningful national and international benchmarks -- the kind they will be judged against in the real world.

Q: Who decides what is on the tests?

A: The tests will be based on the widely accepted frameworks of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). These frameworks are developed by nationally recognized teachers and other educators and community leaders, with input from thousands of interested parents, teachers and others interested in education.

The NAEP is given regularly to a small sample of students so that we can see how states and the nation are doing in reading, math, and other areas. At present 43 states -- including West Virginia -- participate in the NAEP and have agreed that the NAEP frameworks in reading and math are good standards for what students should know in these critical subjects.

Working from the NAEP frameworks, a recognized group of experts in reading and math, including teachers, will develop the test and make it available to test publishers and schools for their use. In every step of the way parents, teachers, research experts, state and community leaders will be included in the process.

Q: Will the federal government have my child's test score? Will it be private?

A: No, the federal government will not be collecting individual student scores. It will be up to states and communities to do that, if they choose to and they will have to keep individual student scores confidential.

Q: What will happen to students who fail the test?

A:

We are developing these tests so that parents and teachers get accurate information about how students are doing in relation to challenging national and international standards. It is the responsibility of states, community leaders, teachers and parents to determine how they will respond to student needs in their community. It will be up to each state and community how they want to use the test results -- and what sanctions or help they want to provide schools and students who aren't doing well.

Q: How will you ensure that teachers are prepared to help students meet these high standards?

A: We have made a high-quality teaching force a key priority. Two recent reports - the report of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future and

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the report of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study -- show that much more is required to prepare and support teachers to enable them to teach to high standards.

The Department of Education is focusing on the most effective strategies to address the challenges in improving teaching quality and accountability, including recruitment, alignment with challenging standards, professional development, and rewards for excellence. The Department supports these efforts through its programs, including Eisenhower professional development, Title I, and Goals 2000 funding, as well as by sharing best practices with the field.

Q: How much will it cost to give the tests?

A: The total cost of developing the tests will be between \$10 - 12 million per year in 1997 and 1998. This includes the cost of writing the items, field testing, licensing the use of the tests, and meetings of advisory committees. The Department of Education will reimburse licensees (for example states, school districts, and testing companies) for the cost of administering the new tests, which is estimated as \$10 - \$12 per student. This investment is more than worth it to make sure we are doing all we can to help students master the basics.

Move to
tests

Teachers: ① Making sure that our teachers are prepared to teach to the high standards is a shared responsibility among school systems, colleges & universities, states and, the teachers themselves.

② We must do a better job of preparing teachers before they get to the classroom, and helping them in their first several years. And we have to help teachers keep learning while they are on the job.

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③ We also need a standard of excellence for teaching practices and we've got to reward excellence. That's why I support NAEPPS, which has developed the best standards. Today there are only about 500 board certified teachers nationally - and none in WVA. I think we need 1 master teacher per school - and I hope I have WVA will take it to do this.

Education General

Question: **National v. Local:** You said you wanted to made education a national priority but isn't education mostly a local issue?

Answer: I have said over and over, the era of big government is over but the era of big national challenges is not. Education is a national priority. We all have a stake in the future of our children and we must all take responsibility for the quality of their education. At the national level, we provide support and assistance in many important ways that do not infringe on the local schools or local school districts. The national tests, which are voluntary, are an example of how we can proceed as a nation to help raise standards for our children, teachers, and schools. We provide the opportunity to state and local governments to participate but they get to make the choice.

Question: **Improving Teaching/Teacher Tenure:** Politicians are talking about getting rid of teachers who aren't performing but teachers have families, too. What assurances will teachers have that they will be treated fairly? And what will the government do to encourage teachers to go back to school to update their certifications and acquire new skills?

Answer: Teacher quality is crucial to improving our schools and helping our children get a better education. One way to improve teaching is to support and encourage teachers who have demonstrated excellence in the profession. I have proposed investing \$100 million to help make it possible for 100,000 experienced teachers to undergo the rigorous National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification process and be certified as outstanding master teachers. Within the next decade, we should have at least one board-certified master teacher in every school. These teachers will help catalyze and inspire better teaching throughout their schools, and I have called on states to reward teachers that attain this distinction.

I have also proposed a \$50 million dollar increase in the Eisenhower Professional Development program which supports intensive teacher training throughout the nation.

At the same time, I support peer assistance programs to help improve the performance of teachers who get burnt-out. And as I've said, we should encourage teachers who are still not making it to move on but only after a fair, timely process.

Question: ***Parental Responsibility:*** What can you do to make sure parents understand what they need to do to make sure their children are ready to start school, and how they can help their children as they go through?

Answer: Over thirty years of research shows that family involvement in children's learning is critical to their child's success. There are lots of things parents can do to help their children start school ready to learn. I strongly urge parents to read to their children starting in their earliest years. Schools can provide a welcoming atmosphere for parents, while local employers can help by giving paid leave for employees to be involved in their children's schools, or provide other means for employees to attend parent-teacher conferences or volunteer as tutors or mentors. Some of the best employers do it.

① Every parent can help, from the ways they communicate with their children, paying attention to them, to helping them learn colors & shapes.

UNREVISED

Question: **Parental Responsibility:** What about parents who can't read and write, or have other limitations? How can they help their children get ready for and successfully proceed through school?

Answer: Through programs like Adult Education and Even Start Family literacy we support local initiatives that assist parents to gain the skills they need to help their children and build a better life for themselves and their families. But parents can help their kids in other ways by showing up at school events, asking kids if they need help and getting it for them, and generally being active in school activities.

Giving them a place to do homework & make sure they do it

Question: **Business Community Partnerships:** More and more, we are finding the need for employees with higher levels of training than we are seeing coming into the workplace. How can employers like me help ensure that more highly qualified candidates will enter the workforce? Will the government help with needed resources to update and expand the skills of my present employees?

Answer: The business community knows as well as any how important high standards are in educating our youth. All over the country, businesses have successfully forged partnerships with their local school communities to provide resources like apprenticeship and mentoring programs, after school programs, etc. Last month, over 200 high-tech industry leaders who hire graduates from across the country endorsed my standards and testing initiative because they know first hand how important it is to have highly skilled graduates entering their workforces. You can help by partnering with your local school community.

Question: **School Construction:** The school construction initiative was one of the best parts of your education agenda. Why did you agree to a budget deal without it?

Answer: [to be filled in by WH]

Question: **School Construction:** Part of the school construction initiative says states will administer subsidies and that funds will be allocated for districts with the largest number of poor children and that state participation is voluntary. Can a local school district apply directly to the Department of Education if the state government elected not to participate? [This question was posed by...]

Answer: [to be filled in by WH]

Question: **Teacher Salaries:** I'd like to become a teacher and I think I'd be a good one. But I can't afford it. Is there anything the government can do to make teacher salaries greater?

Answer: **Proposed answer:** Teacher salaries are set by local and state people but on the national we are doing everything we can to increase the quality of teaching and to get 100,000 more teachers in schools by the year 2,000 which are nationally board certified. By expand national professional teaching standards, states like N. Carolina have been able to give supplements to teachers that have national certification.

Income
conformant
repayment of
student loan

Question: **Vouchers:** I think voucher programs provide an opportunity to some parents they otherwise would not have -- the send their child to a private or parochial school. What is your position on school vouchers?

Answer: School vouchers take needed funds from public education to support private and parochial schools. I believe there are better ways to provide greater school choice to students and their families. One way is for states and school districts to provide public school choice plans that give every parent the ability to choose their child's public school. Another way is to have every state pass a charter school law that allows parents and teachers to start new public charter schools that stay open only as long they do a good job. In fact, I have proposed nearly doubling the charter school start-up program (to \$100 million next year) to help start 3,000 charter schools over the next several years.

Question: **Safe Schools:** There are stories all the time about people walking into schools and shooting kids, fights, drugs, etc. What is the government doing to stop it?

Answer: I have challenged all schools to put in place high standards of discipline and behavior along with tough measures to keep guns and drugs out of schools. Last year I protected the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Programs that provides school security, and drug and violence prevention programs in 97 percent of our country's school districts. I also support school uniforms as one way to deter school violence, and have encouraged communities to enforce truancy laws.

Question: **Safe Schools/IDEA:** Disabled children who are disruptive in

school get treated differently than other children. Do you think this is fair? What about the other children in the classroom?

Answer: The newly authorized law that protects the rights of disabled children gives teachers and schools greater flexibility in dealing with these issues by, among other things, allowing school officials to act quickly to avoid situations that involve weapons and drugs.

from Frank

Business: **Technology.** What can the business community do to help the educational community to stay up to date with the major technological advances that are occurring today?

Answer: The business community has been one of the biggest supporters of our education technology initiative and West Virginia is a national leader in the use of technology in the classrooms. ~~Forty~~ percent of West Virginia's schools are ~~are now~~ connected to the Internet and 14,000 educators have been trained to use computers for basic skills instruction.

Business: **School to Work.** How do I open my business up to the school to work program?

Answer: Business supports school-to-work partnerships because they represent an investment in people which yields access to highly trained, versatile workers who are certified and knowledgeable in all aspects of an industry. The National Employer Leadership Council was founded by 19 CEOs of leading companies to promote work-based learning opportunities for all students in America's schools in collaboration with other business organizations, school systems, public sector organizations and federal, state and local governments.

Business: **Tax Relief.** Could there be tax relief to small business which provide opportunities for our students via job shadowing, mentoring, apprenticeships?

Answer: [WH call]

Role of Gov.t: **Federal v. Local.** What is the federal government's responsibility in public education in America and how does it fill that responsibility without becoming the "big brother" that seems to permeate our society today?

Answer: I have said over and over, the era of big government is over but the era of big national challenges is not. Education is a national priority. We all have a stake in the future of our children and we must all take responsibility for the quality of their education. The **Department of Education** provides support and assistance to local schools and school districts in many important ways that do not infringe on the local schools or local school districts. My programs for national tests, which are voluntary, is an example of how we can proceed as a nation to help raise standards for our

Answer: [WH call]

Parent: **Parental Involvement:** I don't have a lot of the skills necessary to help my child in school. What can someone like me do?

Answer: Over thirty years of research shows that family involvement in children's learning is critical to their child's success. There are lots of things parents can do to help their children start school ready to learn and throughout school and there are things schools and the local community can do. Parents can help their kids by showing up at their school events, asking them if they need help and getting it for them, and generally being active in their school activities. Teachers and parents can develop compacts that outline mutual goals and responsibilities. Local employers can help by promoting flextime or other ways to that allow parents to attend parent-teacher conferences or volunteer as tutors or mentors.

Student: **Preparation for the Future.** How can I be sure what I am learning will really prepare me for my future or for the many career changes economists say I'm going to make in my lifetime?

Answer: That's a good question because that's exactly why I am here -- to help make sure you get the learning and skills necessary to compete in a changing global society. Through higher standards and a way to measure what you are learning, parents and teachers can better determine if you really are learning what you should be.

Student: **Motivation:** I see a lot of students who do not have an individual desire to succeed. How do we develop positive attitudes among students toward their own education?

Answer: I think we all have to help each other understand how important a challenging education is to our future. You, as a student can help just by being concerned about the issue and helping to encourage your peers to reach for higher standards and to succeed. The education community, the business community and others must find ways to provide the support young people need to feel motivated and ready to learn.

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Answer: [WH call?]

Student: ***After-School Programs:*** Both of my parents work. Will there be any money to have after-school programs at schools like mine?

Answer: My budget includes a new initiative to provide safe havens and to extend learning opportunities for children and their families at schools across the country. The initiative will help after-school, summer and weekend programs get started as Community Learning Centers and foster community involvement.

Need Further Work

Q: Will children with disabilities and limited English proficiency be included in these tests?

A: Yes. We want to make sure that students with disabilities and students with limited English will be able to take the test whenever possible. This means that we will provide the math test in Spanish. It also means that when the tests are administered, schools would provide accommodations that students need such as extended response time for students with disabilities or access to an English dictionary for the math test for students with limited English proficiency.

*Need but
a lot of
calculator*

Q: Why is the math test being given in English and Spanish but the reading test is only being given in English?

A: Developing the ability to read in English is a basic that every child has to have to succeed in American schools and society. ~~On the other hand, competency in math cuts across languages.~~ There are many immigrant and other children at the 8th grade level who have limited English proficiency but who can learn advanced math and should be asked to show what math they know. We are providing a bilingual math test in Spanish and English because Spanish is the most common language other than English among students.

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Q: Will you allow kids to use calculators on the new tests? Shouldn't kids know their multiplication tables on their own and not rely on calculators?

A: Kids should learn the basics. They should know how to add, subtract, multiply and divide. However, that after a child has mastered the basics, calculators can be a useful tool for learning more difficult mathematics. After a child has mastered arithmetic, hopefully by the end of fourth or fifth grade, calculators can be effective time-savers so that students spend time applying mathematical concepts to real world problems. (NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE YET ON THIS FOR THE TEST BUT THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MADE UP OF NATIONALLY KNOWN MATH TEACHERS WILL BE ADVISING ON THIS ISSUE AND WE EXPECT THAT CALCULATOR USE WILL BE PERMITTED FOR AT LEAST PART OF THE MATH TEST.)

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Q: How will you ensure that teachers are prepared to help students meet these high standards?

A: We have made a high-quality teaching force a key priority. Two recent reports - the report of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future and the report of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study -- show that much more is required to prepare and support teachers to enable them to teach to high standards.

The Department of Education is focusing on the most effective strategies to address the challenges in improving teaching quality and accountability, including recruitment, alignment with challenging standards, professional development, and rewards for excellence. The Department supports these efforts through its programs, including Eisenhower professional development, Title I, and Goals 2000 funding, as well as by sharing best practices with the field.

Question: **Technology:** At the same time that we provide our children important and exciting learning opportunities through technology, how do we protect our children from the negative influences and forces on the Internet?

Answer: [to be filled in by WH]

Local Questions/Issues: (These questions/responses were derived from Bob Kittle, Harrison County School Superintendent, who gathered a group of teachers, students and business and community leaders together to draw up questions they believed the community would like the President to address).

Educator: ***Internet Access.*** With the emphasis on connecting classrooms to the Internet, how can our public school children be protected from the harmful aspects of the Internet?

Answer: [To be filled in by WH]

Educator: ***E-rate.*** E-rate funds for communications and Internet connection schools and libraries are being made on a first-come, first serve basis. Will the funds be available again and how will you ensure equity in distribution of funds?

Answer: Over the next several months, the Federal Communication Commission will work with the Department of Education and the education community to develop an easy application process for schools and libraries to follow. **[needs to be finished]**

Educator/
Principal: ***Partnerships.*** What can the state, county or local school systems do to help implement the goals set by the education summits and your national initiatives?

Answer: There are lots of things states and county school systems can do to help implement my ten-point plan and there are lots of resources but the first thing they have to do is sign-up -- make the commitment to fight for our children's future. By signing up to set rigorous standards with national tests, this community is taking a giant step in this direction and I want to say thank you again.

Educator/
Principal: ***Accountability.*** I am a school principal and want to be accountable as an educator and be a part of the "village" to help raise the children? What assurances can you give me that I will be allowed to do that?

Answer: Accountability is the key to making this effort work and I'm glad you're ready to sign up for it. In adopting my plan to raise standards, this community is also agreeing to be held accountable for the results.

Business: **Technology.** What can the business community do to help the educational community to stay up to date with the major technological advances that are occurring today?

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children, teachers, and schools.

Parent: **Values/Character.** Your Call to Action wants to make sure our schools instill basic American values. What are these values and how do you plan to make this happen?

Answer: Through two White House Conferences on Character Education and the development of character education through the Improving America's School Act, I have tried to promote schools as places for values, not violence. We must teach our children respect, the value of hard work and citizenship.

Parent: **Crime, poverty.** We need to address root causes of crime like illiteracy, poverty, joblessness and prejudice. What programs are we initiating to address these problems, especially illiteracy?

Answer: You are right -- we face very serious challenges as we look toward the 21st century. Nearly 40 percent of America's 4th graders are reading below the basic level. But studies prove that sustained individualized attention and tutoring after school and over the summer can raise reading levels. Reading with children at the youngest age can help all our children read by an early age. That is why I have issued America Reads Challenge and asked everyone in America, parents, teachers, libraries, colleges, business leaders, senior citizens, to join the effort to meet the challenge of ensuring all children read independently and well by the end of third grade. [Add sentence on jobs, race -- POTUS does like to talk about race?]

Parent: **Early Childhood.** How does your administration plan to address and emphasize the importance that good nutrition plays into the ability of the child to learn.

Answer: [WH fill in re: nutrition programs?]

Parent: **Vouchers.** What is the availability of tax credits to parents who have been providing their children a private education through home schooling, charter schools, parochial or other private schools?

Answer: [Voucher answer or other provided by WH?]

Parent: **Volunteerism.** Do you agree that volunteerism makes a difference in schools? How can volunteers become actively involved in the educational process and still protect the safety and privacy of the student?

what about
inner??
poverty

Answer: [WH call]

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WEST VIRGINIA STANDARDS TOWN HALL MEETING
Thursday, May 22, 1997

Q & A's for the President

National Standards/National Tests

Question: **Standards:** Why is the development of national standards so important *now*?

Answer: Student achievement is not improving fast enough. Today's economy demands higher and higher levels of skill and education to succeed in all types of jobs and far too many children are not meeting the standards that will prepare them for tomorrow. High standards pull young people up and encourage them to work harder and create high expectations for themselves. They also provide a benchmark for parents and teacher^s for what children should know and whether they are learning it. ~~And~~ places that have set high standards have shown improvement in student achievement. I want that improvement for *all* our children.

Question: **Standards:** How are you going to ensure that all children can meet these high standards?

Answer: I have challenged every state and every school to establish meaningful standards for what students should know in core subjects like reading and math. These are the basics. We will develop national tests that will help measure whether our children are meeting these standards, ~~and help us adjust what we teach if they are not.~~ *voluntary* These standards give feedback to parents and teachers and help let them know what they need to do to help their children succeed. *first*

Question: **National Test.** What are you doing to support participation of students with disabilities in the 4th and 8th grade assessments you are developing?

Answer: The Department of Education, which is working with education experts to help develop the tests, will make the 4th grade reading and 8th grade math tests available to states and schools in formats ~~that will make them~~ accessible to students with disabilities. In addition, the department will provide technical assistance and other support to help schools ensure that students with disabilities are appropriately included. *This should be the licensee will make the tests accessible, not the dept.* *Schools can get technical assistance* *It will be provided*

Q: Why do we need these tests? Aren't there already enough tests?

A: This isn't about tests. It is about achieving high standards and mastering the basics. We owe it to our children to make sure that no matter where they live, they are getting the best education possible.

✓ ✓

Insert (A) & (B)

In addition, states and districts can use this test as a supplement or replacement to parts of their existing testing program, if they want.

Q: Why 4th grade reading and 8th grade math?

A. Reading and math are two of the most basic skills. Children can't move ahead in school in any subject if they can't read English by the 4th grade. And 8th grade math is a pivotal point in terms of making sure that a student has mastered the mathematics ~~she~~ needs to move forward in high school and go to college or into the work place.

✓ ✓

Children go to school for the first three years of grade school to learn how to read, so they can spend the rest of their years reading to learn. There is a strong link between low reading skills, falling behind in school, disruptive behavior, and dropping out. Yet, about 40% of our children are not learning how to read well and independently by the end of third grade, decreasing their chances of succeeding in school and in life. We need to change this.

8th grade math is also a critical turning point for students. At that point, students need to have mastered the basics of math -- including the foundations of algebra and geometry -- so they are prepared to go on and take the harder math and science courses they need for college preparation or jobs right out of high school. In our high technology, international economy, our students will need to know more mathematics than most of us adults learned. ~~And, having good math skills is increasingly a prerequisite for getting a good job.~~ Students who don't take algebra and geometry are much less likely to go to college than students who do.

~~Unfortunately, right now, the United States is below the international average in math at 8th grade. We can do better. Many more young people should be taking algebra by the end of the 8th grade so they can take more advanced course in high school. That is what most 13 year olds are doing around the world. Only 25% of our 8th graders have learned algebra -- as opposed to almost 100% of students in other industrialized nations. Having a national benchmark in math at 8th grade will show whether our students are where they should be.~~

Question: What about standards in other subjects like science and history?

Answer: I support high standards not just in reading and math but for student learning generally, in all the core subjects, teacher quality,

and school performance. I also support high standards of discipline and conduct, challenging all schools to teach good values and good citizenship. At the national level we are focusing on reading and math because they are the basics, and there is a national consensus that every student needs to master these two core subjects.

Q: Isn't 4th grade too late for a reading test?

A: No. Children are expected to have made the transition from learning to read to reading to learn by the 4th grade. This is the critical turning point -- and the point we should measure to see that all our students are making it.

Of course, a short national test in reading does not replace what teachers and parents have always done -- paying attention to children's progress in learning to read all through the critical early childhood years.

Q: ~~How will these tests differ from existing tests?~~

Delete

A: These tests will provide parents and teachers individual scores for their students and children as they relate to a challenging national and, in the case of mathematics, an international benchmark. All students take every item on the tests, and every item will be available after the administration of the tests, as well as scoring guides. ~~That way~~, unlike the standardized tests your child takes now, with this test, the parent and teacher will actually be able to see the test questions and where your child did well or poorly on the test.

(B)

Q: ~~What will these tests tell us that we don't already know?~~

Delete

A: ~~These tests will provide information to parents and teachers about individual students scores and how close a child is to reaching high national standards. Currently, there is no way of knowing whether your child's progress or your child's school is measuring up to national and international standards. These tests will give parents and teachers, wherever they live, an opportunity to know how their children are doing. They will have challenging national benchmarks, and in the case of mathematics, international benchmarks to measure against.~~

This is not a substitute for tests that states are developing, but will be used by states and communities in conjunction with their own tests. It will provide national and (for math, international) points of comparison for fourth grade reading and for eighth grade math.

Q: Who decides what is on the tests?

A: The tests will be based on the widely accepted frameworks of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). These frameworks are developed by nationally recognized teachers and other educators and community leaders, with input from thousands of interested parents, teachers and others interested in education.

✓ The NAEP is given regularly to a small sample of students so that we can see how states and the nation are doing in reading, math, and other areas. At present 43 states -- including West Virginia -- participate in the NAEP and have agreed that the NAEP frameworks in reading and math are good standards for what students should know in these critical subjects.

~~Working from the NAEP frameworks, a recognized group of experts in reading and math, including teachers, will develop the test and make it available to test publishers and schools for their use. In every step of the way parents, teachers, research experts, state and community leaders will be included in the process.~~

✓ **Q: Will the federal government have my child's test score? ~~Will it be private?~~** ^{5/6/}

A: ~~No~~, the federal government will not be collecting individual student scores. It will be up to states and communities to do that, if they choose to and they will have to keep individual student scores confidential.

? **Q: What will happen to students who fail the test?**

make
A: POTUS answer
We are developing these tests so that parents and teachers get accurate information about how students are doing in relation to challenging national and international standards. It is the responsibility of states, community leaders, teachers and parents to determine how they will respond to student needs in their community. It will be up to each state and community how they want to use the test results -- and what sanctions or help they want to provide schools and students who aren't doing well.

Q: How will you ensure that teachers are prepared to help students meet these high standards?

A: We have made a high-quality teaching force a key priority. Two recent reports - the report of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future and

the report of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study -- show that much more is required to prepare and support teachers to enable them to teach to high standards.

The Department of Education is focusing on the most effective strategies to address the challenges in improving teaching quality and accountability, including recruitment, alignment with challenging standards, professional development, and rewards for excellence. The Department supports these efforts through its programs, including Eisenhower professional development, Title I, and Goals 2000 funding, as well as by sharing best practices with the field.

Q: How much will it cost to give the tests?

A: The total cost of developing the tests will be between \$10 - 12 million ^{annually} ~~per year~~ ~~in 1997 and 1998~~. This includes the cost of writing the items, field testing, ~~licensing the use of the tests, and meetings of advisory committees.~~ The Department of Education will reimburse licensees (for example states, school districts, and testing companies) for the cost of administering the new tests, which is estimated as \$10 - \$12 per student. ^{During 1999,} This investment is more than worth it to make sure we are doing all we can to help students master the basics.

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for 1st year

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Answer: I have said over and over, the era of big government is over but the era of big national challenges is not. Education is a national priority. We all have a stake in the future of our children and we must all take responsibility for the quality of their education. At the national level, we provide support and assistance in many important ways that do not infringe on the local schools or local school districts. The national tests, which are voluntary, are an example of how we can proceed as a nation to help raise standards for our children, teachers, and schools. We provide the opportunity to state and local governments to participate but they get to make the choice.

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UNREVISED

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Answer: Through programs like Adult Education and Even Start Family literacy we support local initiatives that assist parents to gain the skills they need to help their children and build a better life for themselves and their families. But parents can help their kids in other ways by showing up at school events, asking kids if they need help and getting it for them, and generally being active in school activities.

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✓✓ Answer: The business community knows as well as any how important high standards are in educating our youth. All over the country, businesses have successfully forged partnerships with their local school communities to provide resources like apprenticeship and mentoring programs, after school programs, etc. Last month, over 200 high-tech industry leaders who hire graduates from across the country endorsed my standards and testing initiative because they know first hand how important it is to have highly skilled graduates entering their workforces. You can help by partnering with your local school community.

Question: **School Construction:** The school construction initiative was one of the best parts of your education agenda. Why did you agree to a budget deal without it?

Answer: [to be filled in by WH]

Question: **School Construction:** Part of the school construction initiative says states will administer subsidies and that funds will be allocated for districts with the largest number of poor children and that state participation is voluntary. Can a local school district apply directly to the Department of Education if the state government elected not to participate? [This question was posed by...]

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school get treated differently than other children. Do you think this is fair? What about the other children in the classroom?

Answer: The newly authorized law that protects the rights of disabled children gives teachers and schools greater flexibility in dealing with these issues by, among other things, allowing school officials to act quickly to avoid situations that involve weapons and drugs.

Local Questions/Issues: (These questions/responses were derived from Bob Kittle, Harrison County School Superintendent, who gathered a group of teachers, students and business and community leaders together to draw up questions they believed the community would like the President to address).

E Lms
Educator: **Internet Access.** With the emphasis on connecting classrooms to the Internet, how can our public school children be protected from the harmful aspects of the Internet?

Answer: [To be filled in by WH]

Educator: **E-rate.** E-rate funds for communications and Internet connection schools and libraries are being made on a first-come, first serve basis. Will the funds be available again and how will you ensure equity in distribution of funds?

Answer: Over the next several months, the Federal Communication Commission will work with the Department of Education and the education community to develop an easy application process for schools and libraries to follow. **[needs to be finished]**

Educator/
Principal: **Partnerships.** What can the state, county or local school systems do to help implement the goals set by the education summits and your national initiatives?

Answer: There are lots of things states and county schools systems can do to help implement my ten-point plan and there are lots of resources but the first thing they have to do is sign-up -- make the commitment to fight for our children's future. By signing up to set rigorous standards with national tests, this community is taking giant step in this direction and I want to say thank you again.

Educator/
Principal: **Accountability.** I am a school principal and want to be accountable as an educator and be a part of the "village" to help raise the children? What assurances can you give me that I will be allowed to do that?

Answer: Accountability is the key to making this effort work and I'm glad you're ready to sign up for it. In adopting my plan to raise standards, this community is also agreeing to be held accountable for the results.

What can locals do

- Use tests & set high standards
- Help prepare teachers to become Head-teacher, and reward them when they do
- Develop and enforce fair standards of conduct for all students
- Get the whole community involved in helping young children learn to read. Pediatricians should prescribe reading to parents of infants and preschoolers. College student, among others, should volunteer to tutor.
- Keep working, as you are in WVA, to make sure every 12 yr old can log on to the Internet
- Start early in letting students & families know that they will need at least 2 yrs of post secondary education.

WEST VIRGINIA STANDARDS TOWN HALL MEETING
Thursday, May 22, 1997

Q & A's for the President

National Standards/National Tests

Question: **Standards:** Why is the development of national standards so important *now*?

Answer: Student achievement is not improving fast enough. Today's economy demands higher and higher levels of skill and education to succeed in all types of jobs and far too many children are not meeting the standards that will prepare them for tomorrow. High standards pull young people up and encourage them to work harder and create high expectations for themselves. They also provide a benchmark for parents and teacher for what children should know and whether they are learning it. And places that have set high standards have shown a difference in student achievement. I want that difference for *all* our children.

Question: **Standards:** How are you going to ensure that all children can meet these high standards?

Answer: I have challenged every state and every school to establish meaningful standards for what students should know in core subjects like reading and math. These are the basics. We will develop national tests that will help measure whether our children are meeting these standards and help us adjust what we teach if they are not. **These standards really give feedback to parents and teachers and help let them know what they need to do to help their children succeed.**

Question: **Standards:** Why is your programs focused on reading and math? What about the other subjects like science and history? [This question was posed by a West Virginia educator]

Answer: My program supports high standards not just in reading and math but for student learning generally, **in all the core subjects**, teacher quality, and school performance. I also support high standards of discipline and conduct, challenging all schools to teach good values and good citizenship. **At the national level we focusing on reading and math because they are the basics -- they are the core subjects. And there is a natinal consensus we need to master these two cores basics.** Children must be

able to read well by the end of the third grade so that they can learn science, history, literature and math.

Question: **National Test.** What are you doing to support participation of students with disabilities in the 4th and 8th grade assessments you are developing?

Answer: The Department of Education, which is working with education experts to help develop the tests, will make the 4th grade reading and 8th grade math tests available to states and schools in formats that will make them accessible to students with disabilities. In addition, the department will provide technical assistance and other support to help schools ensure that students with disabilities are appropriately included.

Q&As for Testing Proposal

Why do we need these tests? Aren't there already enough tests?

This isn't about tests. It is about achieving high standards and mastering the basics. We owe it to our children to make sure that no matter where they live, they are getting the best education possible.

These tests will be different than any other tests our students take. That is because with these tests, we will be able to see how each student is doing in the basics of reading and math in relationship to challenging national and international standards. That is important information that parents and teachers don't have now.

There is no let currently that will tell a parent how their child is doing

These tests will not significantly increase the testing burden on students. The reading test is 1 and ½ hours in the 4th grade and the mathematics tests is 1 and ½ hour in the 8th grade -- 3 hours over all the student's years in school. That is not a lot of time when you think about all the important information we will be getting or when you realized that 43 percent of 4th graders watch television 4 or more hours *daily*.

*against
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and in 8th
grade math
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average.
RWE*

In addition, states and districts can use this test as a supplement or replacement to parts of their existing testing program if they want.

Why 4th grade reading and 8th grade math?

Reading and math are two of the most basic skills. Children can't move ahead in school in any subject if they can't read English by the 4th grade. And 8th grade math is a pivotal point in terms of making sure that a student has mastered the mathematics she needs to move forward in high school and go to college or into the work place.

Children go to school for the first three years of grade school to learn how to read, so they can spend the rest of their years reading to learn. There is a strong link between low reading skills, falling behind in school, disruptive behavior, and dropping out. Yet, about 40% of our children are not learning how to read well and independently by the end of third grade, decreasing their chances of succeeding in school and in life. We need to change this.

8th grade math is also a critical turning point for students. At that point, students need to have mastered the basics of math -- including the foundations of algebra and geometry -- so they are prepared to go on and take the harder math and science courses they need for college preparation or jobs right out of high school. In our high technology, international economy, our students will need to know more mathematics than most of us adults learned. And,

having good math skills is more and more a prerequisite for getting a good job, students who don't take algebra and geometry are much less likely to go to college than students who do.

Unfortunately, right now, the United States is below the international average in math at 8th grade. We can do better. Many more young people should be taking algebra by the end of the 8th grade so they can take more advanced course in high school. That is what most 13 year olds are doing around the world. Only 25% of our 8th graders have learned algebra -- as opposed to almost 100% of students in other industrialized nations. Having a national benchmark in math at 8th grade will show whether our students are where they should be.

Isn't 4th grade too late for a reading test?

No. Children are expected to have made the transition from learning to read to reading to learn by the 4th grade. This is the critical turning point -- and the point we should measure to see that all our students are making it.

Of course, a short national test in reading does not replace what teachers and parents have always done -- paying attention to children's progress in learning to read all through the critical early childhood years.

How will these tests differ from existing tests?

These tests will provide parents and teachers individual scores for their students and children as they relate to a challenging national and, in the case of mathematics, an international benchmark. All students take every item on the tests, and every item will be available after the administration of the tests, as well as scoring guides. That way, unlike the standardized tests your child takes now, with this test, the parent and teacher will actually be able to see the test questions and where your child did well or poorly on the test.

What will these tests tell us that we don't already know?

These tests will provide information to parents and teachers about **individual** students' scores and how close that child is to reaching high national standards. Currently, there is no way of knowing whether your child's progress or your child's school is measuring up to national and international standards. These tests will give parents and teachers, wherever they live, an opportunity to know how their children are doing. They will have challenging national benchmarks, and in the case of mathematics, international benchmarks to measure against as they seek to define and meet state and local standards of excellence.

This is not a substitute for the tests states are developing; rather it is designed to supplement and anchor state assessments to national and international benchmarks for student performance. Indeed this test will be used by states and communities in conjunction with their own tests. It will provide two points of comparison, one for fourth grade reading and one for eighth grade math.

Who decides what is on the tests?

The tests will be based on the widely accepted frameworks of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The NAEP frameworks are developed by the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) which is made up of nationally recognized teachers and other educators and community leaders, with input from thousands of interested parents, teachers and others interested in education. The NAEP is given regularly to a small sample of students so that we can see how states and the nation are doing in reading, math, and other areas. At present 43 states -- including West Virginia -- participate in the NAEP and have agreed that the NAEP frameworks in reading and math are good standards for what students should know in these critical subjects.

Working from the NAEP frameworks, a recognized group of experts in reading and math, including teachers, will develop the test and make it available to test publishers and schools for their use. In every step of the way parents, teachers, research experts, state and community leaders will be included in the process -- and that's part of why I'm (the POTUS) here.

Will the federal government have my child's test score? Will it be private?

No, the federal government will not be collecting individual student scores. It will be up to states and communities to do that, if they choose to and they will have to keep individual student scores confidential.

Will children with disabilities and limited English proficiency be included in these tests?

Yes. We want to make sure that students with disabilities and students with limited English will be able to take the test whenever possible. This means that we will provide the math test in Spanish. It also means that when the tests are administered, schools would provide accommodations that students need such as extended response time for students with disabilities or access to an English dictionary for the math test for students with limited

English proficiency.

Why is the math test being given in English and Spanish but the reading test is only being given in English?

Developing the ability to read in English is a basic that every child has to have to succeed in American schools and society. On the other hand, competency in math cuts across languages. There are many immigrant and other children at the 8th grade level who have limited English proficiency but who can learn advanced math and should be asked to show what math they know. We are providing a bilingual math test in Spanish and English because Spanish is the most common language other than English among students.

What will happen to students who fail?

We are developing these tests so that parents and teachers get accurate information about how students are doing in relation to challenging national and international standards. It is the responsibility of states, community leaders, teachers and parents to determine how they will respond to student needs in their community. It will be up to each state and community how they want to use the test results -- and what sanctions or help they want to provide schools and students who aren't doing well.

We will do what we can to help. I have made investing in education my number one budget priority.

Shouldn't kids know their multiplication tables on their own and not rely on calculators?

Kids should learn the basics. They should know how to add, subtract, multiply and divide. However, that after a child has mastered the basics, calculators can be a useful tool for learning more difficult mathematics. After a child has mastered arithmetic, hopefully by the end of fourth or fifth grade, calculators can be effective time-savers so that students spend time applying mathematical concepts to real world problems. (NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE YET ON THIS FOR THE TEST BUT THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MADE UP OF NATIONALLY KNOWN MATH TEACHERS WILL BE ADVISING ON THIS ISSUE AND WE EXPECT THAT CALCULATOR USE WILL BE PERMITTED FOR AT LEAST PART OF THE MATH TEST.)

How will you ensure that teachers are prepared to help students meet these high standards?

We have made a high-quality teaching force a key priority. Two recent reports -- the report of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future and the report of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study -- show that much more is required to prepare and support teachers to enable them to teach to high standards.

The Department of Education is focusing on the most effective strategies to address the challenges in improving teaching quality and accountability, including recruitment, alignment with challenging standards, professional development, and rewards for excellence. The Department supports these efforts through its programs, including Eisenhower professional development, Title I, and Goals 2000 funding, as well as by sharing best practices with the field.

How much will it cost to give the tests?

The total cost of developing the tests will be between \$10 - 12 million per year in 1997 and 1998. This includes the cost of writing the items, field testing, licensing the use of the tests, and meetings of advisory committees. The Department of Education will reimburse licensees (for example states, school districts, and testing companies) who wish to administer the new tests which is estimated as \$10 - \$12 per student.

Education General

Question: **National v. Local:** You said you wanted to made education a national priority but isn't education mostly a local issue?

Answer: I have said over and over, the era of big government is over but the era of big national challenges is not. Education is a national priority. We all have a stake in the future of our children and we must all take responsibility for the quality of their education. The **U.S. Department of Education** provides support and assistance to local schools and school districts in many important ways that do not infringe on the local schools or local school districts. My programs for national tests, which are voluntary, is an example of how we can proceed as a nation to help raise standards for our children, teachers, and schools. **We are providing the opportunity to state and local governments the opportunity to participate but they get to make the choice.**

Question: **Improving Teaching/Teacher Tenure:** Politicians are talking about getting rid of teachers who aren't performing but teachers have families, too. What assurances will teachers have that they will be treated fairly? What will the government do to provide to encourage teachers to go back to school to update their certifications and acquire new skills? [This question was posed by a West Virginia educator].

Answer: Teacher quality is key to improving our schools and helping our children get a better education. I would like to see at least one board-certified master teacher in every school. I proposed a \$21 million dollar investment next year that would help develop teacher certification programs in more than 30 teaching areas. I have proposed to invest \$50 million dollar increase in the Eisenhower Professional Development program which supports intensive teacher training. And I support peer assistance programs to help improve the performance of teachers who get burnt-out and have expanded efforts to help teachers become more technologically literate and use technology to improve training available to teachers. And as I've said, we should encourage teachers who are still not making it to move on but only after a fair, timely process.

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Question: **Parental Responsibility:** What can you do to make sure parents really understand what they need to do to make sure their children are ready to start school, and how they can help their children as they go through?

Answer: Over thirty years of research shows that family involvement in children's learning is critical to their child's success. There are lots of things parents can do to help their children start school ready to learn and throughout school and there are things schools and the local community can do. I strongly urge parents should read to their children starting in their earliest years. Teachers and parents can develop compacts that outline mutual goals and responsibilities. Local employers can help by promoting flextime, **or give paid leave two hours every two weeks for employers to be involved in their schools**, or other ways to that allow parents to attend parent-teacher conferences or volunteer as tutors or mentors. **Some of the best employers do it.**

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only need to work w/ local educators community / parents on how to help the understand the e-rate / upgrade their schools.

Answer: There are lots of things states and county schools systems can do to help implement my ten-point plan and there are lots of resources but the first thing they have to do is sign-up -- make the commitment to fight for our children's future. By signing up to set rigorous standards with national tests, this community is taking giant step in this direction and I want to say thank you again. *Almost 700*

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Answer: Accountability is the key to making this effort work and I'm glad you're ready to sign up for it. In adopting my plan to raise standards, this community is also agreeing to be held accountable for the results.

I'm glad that 2 steps have signed up for that. That's our step. It requires teachers broken apart early together to succeed.

Business: **Technology.** What can the business community do to help the educational community to stay up to date with the major technological advances that are occurring today?

Answer: The business community has been one of the biggest supporters of our education technology initiative and West Virginia is a national leader in the use of technology in the classrooms. Forty percent of West Virginia's schools are now connected to the Internet and 14,000 educators have been trained to use computers for basic skills instruction.

Business: **School to Work.** How do I open my business up to the school to work program?

Answer: Business supports school-to-work partnerships because they represent an investment in people which yields access to highly trained, versatile workers who are certified and knowledgeable in all aspects of an industry. The National Employer Leadership Council was founded by 19 CEOs of leading companies to promote work-based learning opportunities for all students in America's schools in collaboration with other business organizations, school systems, public sector organizations and federal, state and local governments.

Business: **Tax Relief.** Could there be tax relief to small business which provide opportunities for our students via job shadowing, mentoring, apprenticeships?

Answer: [WH call]

Role of Gov.t: **Federal v. Local.** What is the federal government's responsibility in public education in America and how does it fill that responsibility without becoming the "big brother" that seems to permeate our society today?

Answer: I have said over and over, the era of big government is over but the era of big national challenges is not. Education is a national priority. We all have a stake in the future of our children and we must all take responsibility for the quality of their education. The **Department of Education** provides support and assistance to local schools and school districts in many important ways that do not infringe on the local schools or local school districts. My programs for national tests, which are voluntary, is an example of how we can proceed as a nation to help raise standards for our

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children, teachers, and schools.

Parent: **Values/Character.** Your Call to Action wants to make sure our schools instill basic American values. What are these values and how do you plan to make this happen?

Answer: Through two White House Conferences on Character Education and the development of character education through the Improving America's School Act, I have tried to promote schools as places for values, not violence. We must teach our children respect, the value of hard work and citizenship. *It's important to give kids work in education*

Parent: **Crime, poverty.** We need to address root causes of crime like illiteracy, poverty, joblessness and prejudice. What programs are we initiating to address these problems, especially illiteracy? *It's important to give kids work in education*

Answer: You are right -- we face very serious challenges as we look toward the 21st century. Nearly 40 percent of America's 4th graders are reading below the basic level. But studies prove that sustained individualized attention and tutoring after school and over the summer can raise reading levels. Reading with children at the youngest age can help all our children read by an early age. That is why I have issued America Reads Challenge and asked everyone in America, parents, teachers, libraries, colleges, business leaders, senior citizens, to join the effort to meet the challenge of ensuring all children read independently and well by the end of third grade. [Add sentence on jobs, race -- POTUS does like to talk about race?] *It's important to give kids work in education*

Elmer Parent: **Early Childhood.** How does your administration plan to address and emphasize the importance that good nutrition plays in the ability of the child to learn.

Answer: [WH fill in re: nutrition programs?]

Parent: **Vouchers.** What is the availability of tax credits to parents who have been providing their children a private education through home schooling, charter schools, parochial or other private schools? *not credits*

Answer: [Voucher answer or other provided by WH?]

Elmer Parent: **Volunteerism.** Do you agree that volunteerism makes a difference in schools? How can volunteers become actively involved in the educational process and still protect the safety and privacy of the student?

Answer: [WH call]

Parent: **Parental Involvement:** I don't have a lot of the skills necessary to help my child in school. What can someone like me do?

Answer: Over thirty years of research shows that family involvement in children's learning is critical to their child's success. There are lots of things parents can do to help their children start school ready to learn and throughout school and there are things schools and the local community can do. Parents can help their kids by showing up at their school events, asking them if they need help and getting it for them, and generally being active in their school activities. Teachers and parents can develop compacts that outline mutual goals and responsibilities. Local employers can help by promoting flextime or other ways to that allow parents to attend parent-teacher conferences or volunteer as tutors or mentors.

Student: **Preparation for the Future.** How can I be sure what I am learning will really prepare me for my future or for the many career changes economists say I'm going to make in my lifetime?

Answer: That's a good question because that's exactly why I am here -- to help make sure you get the learning and skills necessary to compete in a changing global society. Through higher standards and a way to measure what you are learning, parents and teachers can better determine if you really are learning what you should be.

Student: **Motivation:** I see a lot of students who do not have an individual desire to succeed. How do we develop positive attitudes among students toward their own education?

Answer: I think we all have to help each other understand how important a challenging education is to our future. You, as a student can help just by being concerned about the issue and helping to encourage your peers to reach for higher standards and to succeed. The education community, the business community and others must find ways to provide the support young people need to feel motivated and ready to learn.

Student: **Teacher Salaries.** I'd like to be a teacher and I think I would be a good one but I can't afford it. Is there anything the government can do to make teacher salaries greater?

Answer: [WH call?]

Student: ***After-School Programs:*** Both of my parents work. Will there be any money to have after-school programs at schools like mine?

Answer: My budget includes a new initiative to provide safe havens and to extend learning opportunities for children and their families at schools across the country. The initiative will help after-school, summer and weekend programs get started as Community Learning Centers and foster community involvement.

Q& A=s for Testing Proposal

Why do we need these tests? Aren't there already enough tests?

This isn't about tests. It is about achieving high standards and mastering the basics. We owe it to our children to make sure that no matter where they live, they are getting the best education possible. And we need to stop plodding forward and make a big jump when it comes to getting excellence into every classroom and we need to start earlier.

This proposal will not significantly increase the testing burden on students. 43 percent of 4th graders watched television 4 or more hours *daily*. The addition of 2 hours for testing during the school year isn't that dramatic a burden.

States and districts can use this test as a supplement or replacement to parts of their existing testing program if they want. It's up to the states to decide if they want to participate in benchmarking against national and international standards.

Why 4th grade reading and 8th grade math?

Reading and math are two of the most basic skills. Children can't move ahead in school in any subject if they can't read English by the 4th grade. And 8th grade math is a pivotal point in terms of making sure that a student is ready for high school work so they can go to college or into the work place.

Children go to school for the first three years of grade school to learn how to read, so they can spend the rest of their years reading to learn. There is a strong link between low reading skills, falling behind in school, disruptive behavior, and dropping out. Compared to the rest of the world we do quite well in teaching our children to read. But there is a real gap in reading ability between kids who read well and those who don't. We want to close that gap.

We have proposed a test for 8th grade math because it will give parents a good indicator that their children are ready for high school. We want to encourage many more young people to take algebra and geometry by the end of the 8th grade. That is what most 13 year olds are doing around the world. Having good math skills is more and more a prerequisite for getting a job in the new emerging technology fields. Taking algebra and geometry is a strong predictor for whether the student will go on to college. Having a national benchmark in math would support curriculum reform to encourage states to provide these key courses to all students.

Isn't 4th grade too late?

Children learn how to read in the first three grades of elementary school. Testing in the 4th grade will give parents and teachers information about how well a child reads. According to the 1994 National Assessment of Educational Progress assessment, 40% of our young people could not read as well as they should in the 4th grade. The voluntary national test will help parents and teachers identify which of their children are still struggling when it comes to reading, and then they, together, will be able to help get that child back on track. It's never too late to learn.

How will these tests differ from existing tests?

These tests will provide parents and teachers individual scores for their students and children as they relate to a national and, in the case of mathematics, an international benchmark. All students take every item on the tests, and every item will be available after the administration of the tests, as well as scoring guides.

What will these tests tell us that we don't already know?

These tests will provide information to parents and teachers about **individual** students' scores and how close that child is to reaching high national standards. Currently, there is no national benchmark that has achievement levels for individual students. Our tests will give parents and teachers, wherever they live, an opportunity to measure the progress they want their children to achieve. They will have national benchmarks, and in the case of mathematics, international benchmarks to measure against as they seek to refine and define state and local standards of excellence.

This is not a substitute for the tests states are developing; rather it is designed to supplement and anchor state assessments to national and international benchmarks for student performance. Indeed this test will be offered by test publishers and used by states and communities in conjunction with their own tests. It will provide two points of comparison, one for fourth grade reading and one for eighth grade math.

Who decides what is on the tests?

The tests will be based on the widely accepted frameworks of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) as developed by the National Assessment Governing Board

(NAGB.) At present 43 states participate in the state level NAPE assessments. It was developed through a national consensus effort in which ideas were sought from hundreds of individuals involved and interested in this country's reading education. A public or private organization will be competitively selected to develop the test and make it available to test publishers and schools for their use. It is also expected that a representative, independent Board will be created to oversee the development and implementation of the test. The development of the tests must be done in partnership with parents, teachers, research experts, state and community leaders and that's part of why I'm (the POTUS) here. We want results not ownership.

Will children with disabilities and limited English proficiency be included in these tests?

Yes. Consistent with civil rights requirements that apply to most schools that would participate, reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities or with limited English proficiency would be provided by school administrators of the test. These responsibilities will be specifically addressed in the development and distribution of the test. Such accommodations may include extended response time for students with disabilities or access to an English dictionary for the math test for students with limited English proficiency.

Why is the math test being given in English and Spanish but the reading test is only being given in English?

Developing the ability to read in English is a basic that every child has to have to succeed in American schools and society. On the other hand, competency in math cuts across languages. Although we expect that there will be fewer limited English proficient children at the 8th grade level than at the 4th grade level, there will still be many immigrant and other children at the 8th grade level who have limited English proficiency. We are providing a bilingual math test in Spanish and English because Spanish is the most common language other than English among elementary and secondary students. We will be exploring further developmental work on possible accommodations for children with other native languages.

What will happen to students who fail?

If a child doesn't do well that means parents and teachers are getting an early warning that the child needs help. That's the advantage of these tests. They send a message to get help early. A child who can't read may have vision problem or dyslexia, or a hearing problem that

high
stakes?

has gone unnoticed. Getting children the help they need early is so important. But how to help a student is something for parents and the teachers. We are not going to dictate or tell parents what is best for an individual child.

Shouldn't kids know their multiplication tables on their own and not rely on calculators?

We believe kids should learn the basics. They should know how to add, subtract, multiply and divide. We also believe, however, that after a child has mastered the basics, calculators can be a useful tool for teaching challenging mathematics. After a child has mastered the basics, hopefully by the end of fifth grade, calculators can be effective time-savers so that students spend time applying mathematical concepts to real world problems. (NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE YET ON THIS FOR THE TEST.)

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How will you ensure that teachers are prepared to help students meet these high standards?

We have made a high-quality teaching force a key priority. Two recent reports -- the report of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future and the report of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study conclude that much more is required to prepare and support teachers to enable them to teach to high standards.

The Department of Education is focusing on the most effective strategies to address the challenges in improving teaching quality and accountability, including recruitment, alignment with challenging standards, professional development, and rewards for excellence. The Department supports these efforts through its programs, including Eisenhower professional development, Title I, and Goals 2000 funding, as well as by sharing best practices with the field.

How much will it cost to give the tests?

The total cost of developing the tests will be between \$10 - 12 million per year in 1997 and 1998. This includes the cost of writing the items, field testing, licensing the use of the tests, and meetings of advisory committees. The Department of Education will reimburse licensees (for example states, school districts, and testing companies) who wish to administer the new tests which is estimated as \$10 - \$12 per student.

too detailed

IDEA and Discipline

Q. I am concerned about keeping our schools safe and disciplined. I understand that the new special education law (IDEA) just passed by Congress still makes it difficult to discipline disruptive students who are disabled. How can the other students learn if teachers can't maintain order?

A. First, let me point that the federal special education law, first passed in the 1970's, has been essential for providing education opportunities for children with disabilities. Before that law was passed, many children with disabilities were denied an education. Since the law was passed, educational opportunities for children with disabilities have increased dramatically, because the law guarantees an education to these children. This is a good thing, because the education of every child is important, because education is the way for for all of our people to become productive and independent citizens. I am proud to be able to sign, next month, the bill continuing this law in effect.

Second, I agree that it is very important for all children that classrooms be orderly places where children can learn and teachers can teach. While maintaining the responsibility to provide children with disabilities with a free and appropriate education, this new bill strengthens the ability of teachers and principals to deal with disruptive or dangerous students, including those with disabilities. It does this by:

- making it easier for principals to remove children with disabilities who bring a gun, weapon or drugs to school, or who pose a danger to themselves, their teachers or their classmates from the classroom, while continuing to provide them with an education in another setting.
- making it easier to address a child's behavior problems early on -- before they get out of hand -- by requiring that these be considered in the development of an Individual Education Plan, and by making the regular classroom teacher a part of the team that develops the plan.

Finding the right balance between the protection of individual rights and the needs of a larger group is often a difficult issue. I am pleased that the Congress, with an overwhelming bipartisan majority, has found a way to strike that balance.

Goals 2000 and School-to-Work Controversies

Q. Aren't these tests just another version of your Goals 2000 program, in which the federal government promotes outcomes-based education, politically-correct history, and a federal takeover of our schools?

A. No. Goals 2000 provides federal support for state and local efforts to raise academic standards in the basic skills and core academic subjects, and for local, bottom up efforts to improve teaching and learning. There are no federal standards or curriculum, and no requirement for outcomes based education or any other particular approach.

With regard to a "federal takeover" of local schools, that simply isn't accurate. Goals 2000 supports local control, not federal control. You don't have to take my word for this. Harrison County and some 40 other school systems in West Virginia have received Goals 2000 funds. You should ask teachers, principals, school board members or parents in those communities if Secretary Riley and the U.S. Department of Education, have come in and set their curriculum or otherwise tried to tell them what to do.

The national tests we are discussing today are focused on basic reading and math skills that all students should master. They are not part of Goals 2000 in any way, and you don't have to give the tests in order to keep receiving Goals 2000 funds. However, I believe every states should participate in Goals 2000 and in these tests. They are both ways of helping our students reach for the highest possible standards.

Q. The School-to-Work program has been somewhat controversial in West Virginia. Is it true that School-to-Work tracks kids into inferior programs of study with low academic standards and requires them to make job decisions in elementary and middle schools?

A. No. The School-to-Work Program is designed to give students the academic and on-the-job-training to prepare them for high skill jobs and further education. School-to-Work does not in any way track students into certain career paths, nor limit their options. It gives students and parents information and opportunities to explore a wide range of career options, and it helps make sure that students learn basic and advanced academic skills that will prepare them either for work or for college.

Testing and Standards Issues

Q. Do you believe students should be required to pass these tests in order to be promoted to the next grade level?

I believe that if we set standards for students, they should be required to meet the standards in order to be promoted from elementary to middle school, from middle school to high school, and before graduating from high school. When I was Governor, we required students to pass an 8th grade test before moving into high school. While some students had difficulty passing the test the first time, almost everyone did ultimately. We gave extra help to students who needed it, including summer school. And over time, the percentage of students who passed the test on the first time increased, as students, teachers and parents came to understand how well the did mattered.

I believe every state should require students to meet standards before they move on. Every state gives their own tests, in addition to these national tests. Each state will need to decide what the best combination of tests would be.

Q. You say these are "national, not federal" standards and tests. What exactly does that mean, especially since the U.S. Department of Education is going to develop them?

A. It means that while the federal government will fund the development of the tests, it is not in charge of what the tests measure, when they are administered, or how they are used in schools and communities around the country.

The tests will be based on the existing National Assessment of Education Progress, which is already used in more than 40 states. The content for these tests -- the reading and math skills they measure -- have already been determined by outside groups of teachers, curriculum specialists and others, and by agreement of state education officials. These content frameworks for reading and math are widely accepted and are based on widespread input, and strong state involvement. They truly are national standards, built from the bottom up. And they are challenging for our youngsters. The new tests I have proposed will measure the same math and reading skills that NAEP already measures.

The federal government will pay for the development of these tests, just as it helps pay for other research and development in education and other policy areas, and just as it has paid for the National Assessment of Education Progress for almost 30 years. Providing good information and good tools to improve our schools has long been part of the federal government's role in education, and should remain so.

Vouchers

Q: I think voucher programs provide an opportunity to some parents they otherwise would not have -- to send their child to a private or parochial school. What is your position on school vouchers?

A: I believe there are better ways to provide greater school choice to students and their families. One very good way is to have every state pass a charter school law that allows parents and teachers to start new public charter schools that stay open only as long they do a good job. In fact, I have proposed nearly doubling the charter school start-up program (to \$100 million next year) to help start 3,000 charter schools over the next several years.

While I support public school choice, I oppose federally funded tuition vouchers for private elementary and secondary schools. I also oppose state funded and locally funded vouchers, which take money away from public schools.

Budget-Related Questions

Q: Why doesn't the budget plan include help for school construction?

A: This is a critical need, and I have proposed a plan for jump-starting State and local school construction and renovation efforts. Unfortunately, there was considerable resistance in the budget negotiations to including it in the agreement. I am disappointed that it could not be included.

- We should remember that if we failed to reach agreement on a balanced budget plan, that would have made local school construction efforts more difficult, by raising interest rates.
- On balance, the agreement was a tremendous success on education overall.
- Within the context of the agreement, I will continue to look for opportunities to address this problem.

Q: Won't Your HOPE Scholarship plan cause college tuitions to go up even more than they already have been?

A: Actually, Federal aid does not seem to have much of an effect on tuition costs. When Federal college aid was rising in the 1970s, real college tuitions remained fairly steady. But when real Federal aid dropped slightly during the 1980s, that is when tuitions rose most sharply. One study suggests that is partly because colleges are trying to provide aid to the lowest-income students, and to do that they increase tuition for everyone else. By restoring the Federal government's commitment to financial aid -- for both low-income and middle-income families -- we are helping to reduce one of the pressures that increases tuition and fees.

Q: Will the IRS be looking at my grades to see if I'm eligible for the HOPE Scholarship??

[NOTE: On Sunday, Frank Raines told CNN that "we think that having the IRS trying to enforce grades may be going a little too far, and we're going to try to find a way to simplify the program."]

A: The IRS would not be looking at student transcripts. But I do want to make sure that we are not only helping people pay for college, but also that they have an incentive to work hard once they are there. A new study from Georgia State University suggests that the grade requirement in Georgia's HOPE Scholarship plan has helped some of the borderline students, those who started out very close to the B average, to perform better in college.

I have gotten some feedback about the grade requirement in my HOPE Scholarship plan, and Secretary Riley and Secretary Rubin will be working closely with Congress to make sure that we encourage students to work hard, but that we do it in a simple way, without imposing any undue burdens on taxpayers or colleges.

Q: DOES THE BUDGET AGREEMENT CUT STUDENT LOANS?

A: No, it will not affect student loan borrowers in any way. There are some savings to taxpayers that we can achieve by making government more efficient and reducing subsidies to middlemen -- something that I proposed in my Budget in January -- and the negotiators agreed to some of those changes to help bring the deficit down by \$1.7 billion. But the agreement makes it clear that there can be no cuts in benefits or availability of loans. (And colleges may continue to choose to participate in the Direct Loan program or the guarantee system).

Q: WITH THE TAX CUTS, WILL THERE BE ANY MONEY LEFT FOR EDUCATION PROGRAMS?

A: The budget agreement includes *the largest increase in our investment in education in 30 years, and the largest single boost in college aid since the G.I. Bill*. It includes:

- **Roughly \$35 billion in tax cuts for higher education**, consistent with the HOPE Scholarship and \$10,000 tax deduction.
- **Pell Grant Expansion**. Includes the largest increase in two decades -- a funding boost of 25%. The maximum award will reach \$3,000, an increase of \$300. In the 1998 budget alone, an additional 348,000 students will receive grants: 130,000 young people from moderate-income families, and 218,000 low income students over the age of 24.
- **Technology Literacy**. Double funding to help ensure that computers are in every classroom, every classroom is connected to the Internet, all teachers are trained, and that high quality software and on-line resources are available to help schools integrate technology into the curriculum so that students can become

technologically literate.

- **Head Start.** Continued expansion toward my goal of 1 million kids in 2002.
- **America Reads.** A child literacy initiative consistent with the America Reads Challenge, to mobilize volunteers to help every child learn to read well and independently by the end of third grade.
- **Job Corps and other Job Training.** A 12% increase for job training programs, including continued expansion of Job Corps